

**Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey
Reconnaissance Survey Final Report
of
Blaine County, Nebraska
prepared for
Nebraska State Historical Society
State Historic Preservation Office**

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
Northern Nebraska Sand Hills Survey Area.....	2
Preservation Biases.....	4
HISTORIC OVERVIEW.....	6
Physical Description.....	6
Original Inhabitants.....	7
Settlement of Nebraska.....	8
County History.....	11
Blaine County Towns.....	12
Ethnic Groups and Population Trends.....	14
Sand Hills Ranching.....	16
Bibliography.....	17
GENERAL SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS.....	19
Introduction.....	19
Numerical Summary of Blaine County Reconnaissance Survey.....	20
A TOPICAL DISCUSSION AND PRELIMINARY INVENTORY OF BLAINE COUNTY PROPERTIES.....	22
IMPORTANT THEMES OF THE BLAINE COUNTY HISTORIC BUILDINGS SURVEY	
SAND HILLS RANGE LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION.....	54
Introduction.....	54
Sand Hills Cattle Ranching Area.....	58
Property Types of the Sand Hills Cattle Ranching Area.....	61
History of Sand Hills Cattle Ranching.....	64

THE IMPACT OF THE KINKAID AND HOMESTEAD ACTS IN THE NORTHERN NEBRASKA SAND HILLS.....	74
SOD HOUSES OF THE NORTHERN NEBRASKA SAND HILLS STUDY REGION.....	80
SOD HOUSE INVENTORY FOR THE NORTHERN NEBRASKA SAND HILLS SURVEY.....	83
EVOLUTION OF THE FAMILY RANCH.....	84
CATALOGUE HOUSES.....	88
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE WORK.....	91
National Register Recommendations.....	91
Potential Historic Context Studies/Multiple Property Nominations.....	92
APPENDIX 1: BLAINE COUNTY HISTORIC BUILDINGS SURVEY INVENTORY.....	95
APPENDIX 2: RECONNAISSANCE RESEARCH DESIGN.....	100
APPENDIX 3: INDEX OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	114
APPENDIX 4: BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	115

INTRODUCTION

In 1966, the National Historic Preservation Act was passed by the 89th United States Congress and subsequently signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson. With this Act, the Secretary of the Interior was called upon to expand and maintain a national register of historic places and give maximum encouragement to state governments to develop statewide historic preservation programs of their own. The Act recognized that one of the prerequisites for an effective national preservation program was the identification of historic resources across the country through comprehensive statewide surveys. Thus, state historic preservation offices were made responsible under the National Historic Preservation Act for decisions concerning the preservation of historic properties in their states.

The manifestation of the 1966 National Historic Preservation Act for Nebraska came in 1967 when state legislation directed the Nebraska State Historical Society to oversee the preservation of historical properties and conduct a comprehensive statewide historic survey. For this, the Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey (NeHBS) was formed and is conducted by the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office (NeSHPO) as a part of the Nebraska State Historical Society. The NeHBS is an ongoing statewide study designed to identify and evaluate properties within a selected area to determine whether they may be of historic, architectural, archeological, or cultural significance. The NeSHPO serves as the central repository for the collected information and becomes the focal point for preservation planning decisions.

Starting with a limited survey of 125 sites, the NeHBS has now documented

approximately 37,000 properties and completed preliminary fieldwork in over two-thirds of Nebraska's 93 counties. The latest effort of the NeSHPO to document historic resources is the completion of the Northern Nebraska Sandhills Historic Building Survey.



Northern Nebraska Sandhills Survey Area

Save America's Heritage was selected by the NeSHPO and engaged in a contractual agreement to conduct the Northern Nebraska Sandhills Historic Buildings Survey. The survey consisted of the completed preliminary fieldwork in nine northern Nebraska counties: Grant, Cherry, Hooker, Thomas, Keya Paha, Brown, Rock, Blaine and Loup. Initiated in September, 1988, the survey was completed in May, 1989. With the completion of the nine-county project, the Northern Nebraska Sandhills was the second region of the state to be completed under the NeSHPO's plan for preliminary statewide reconnaissance coverage by

1991-92.

The primary objective of the survey was to provide a preliminary characterization of the extant historic resources in the northern Nebraska Sandhills region. The effort to document properties contributing to the context of Nebraska's historic architecture produces information which serves not only as a resource in preservation management, but also expresses a genuine concern for the history of the Great Plains built environment.

In addition to this, the historic buildings survey of the northern Sandhills region has produced information which serves not only as a tool for local and state preservation planning but also contributes knowledge to the contextual overview of Nebraska's historic architecture. With each historic building survey performed by the NeSHPO, additional information is added to a larger pool of data which allows a greater understanding of the historic resources extant throughout the state.

Another primary objective of the survey was the identification of a definitive group of historic properties potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The Historic Buildings Survey of Blaine County has accomplished this goal by identifying a total of 20 historic properties considered potentially eligible for the NRHP. In addition to the completion of these primary goals, several of the survey's secondary goals were also satisfied. These include the identification of specific building types or construction methods which either related or were unique to the historic built environment of Nebraska, and the expansion of knowledge regarding ethnic settlement and building technologies.

Preservation Biases

It is Save America's Heritage belief that people, and the places in which they live, are the raw materials of history. A community, its inhabitants and its development through time are proper subjects for our contemplation, for it is through such studies that we gain a fuller comprehension of the present.

The public mention of a "historic building survey" often fails to produce a collective image or understanding. A strong social awareness towards preservation of our built environment does exist in the rehabilitation of aged urban districts for example, but the notion of recording historic structures as a preservation activity remains a generally obscure concept. Fortunately, this obscurity is due to a lack of awareness rather than a lack of genuine concern. Communicating the importance of this activity as a documentation of our Great Plains history cannot be stressed enough.

Furthermore, it is also the opinion of Save America's Heritage that such surveys are a necessary tool in the recording of Great Plains settlement. The numerical demise of Nebraska's rural architecture is directly linked to the decline of the rural-based population. In the year 1900, 76.3% of Nebraska's population was found in rural towns or on the farms. However, by 1980 the rural population has dropped nearly 40 percentage points to the current figure of 37.1% (see Table 1).

TABLE 1. LOCATIONAL PERCENTAGE OF NEBRASKA POPULATION,
 1900-1980.

Selected Years	Population	Urban Percentage	Rural
1900	1,066,300	23.7	76.3
1910	1,192,214	26.1	73.9
1920	1,296,372	31.3	68.7
1930	1,377,963	35.3	64.7
1940	1,315,834	39.1	60.9
1950	1,325,510	46.9	53.1
1960	1,411,921	54.3	45.7
1970	1,485,333	61.5	38.5
1980	1,569,825	62.9	37.1

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census of Population, 1980.

The affect on the historic built environment has been devastating. The number of houses now exceeds the demand and the older, perhaps less functional and aesthetic buidings are not re-inhabited. The buildings then deteriorate and are either dismantled or collapse. Consequently, there exists an increasing decline in the "pool" of historic building resources. Compounding the demise of these rural resources is the current decline of the agricultural economy. The prospect of farming as a profitable future for the next generation is now less and less desirable. This, in turn, contributes to the decreasing rural population and re-inhabitation of existing historic buildings.

The enumeration of social changes affecting historic resources can be lengthy and complex. It is clear, however, that the result of these changes coupled with the diminishing effects of time substantiate the need for historic building surveys. It is through such surveys that we not only record the built settlement of Nebraska, but reach a fuller understanding of our present world.

HISTORIC OVERVIEW

"...dun-colored sandhills crowded upon each other far into the horizon, wind singing in the red bunch grass or howling over the snow-whipped knobs of December..."

From Sandhill Sundays (1930)
by Mari Sandoz

Physical Description

Blaine County is located in the Sand Hills region of north central Nebraska. It is bordered by Brown and Cherry Counties to the north, Thomas County to the west, Custer and Logan Counties to the south and Loup County to the east. The county is 24 miles from north to south and 30 miles from east to west. There are 720 square miles of land in the county.

The Dismal and Middle Loup Rivers converge in the southwest portion of the county near the present site of Dunning. The North Loup River flows into the county in the extreme northwestern corner and exits at the center of the eastern county line. The rivers provide a natural setting for various forms of trees and wild fruits as well as providing wildlife habitation.

The soil of the county is mostly sandy loam and the region is well suited to ranching. Wild hay grows in abundance and provides a natural supply of feed for grazing animals.

The climate of the Sand Hills and Blaine county is one of harsh extremes. The winters are long and cold with plenty of snow and the summers are likewise long and very hot. The Fall and Spring are brief but pleasant. The wind velocity is generally high.

Original Inhabitants

The first people known to have roamed the area that includes the Sand Hills of Nebraska were those of the Folsom Culture. It existed between 15,000 to 10,000 years ago. Sites of the Folsom Culture people have been found at the head of the North Loup, Niobrara, Elkhorn, Platte and Republican Rivers in Nebraska. The Niobrara and North Loup Rivers are in the Sand Hills region of the state. The Yuma were the next people known to have inhabited the Sand Hills region. Yuma Culture overlapped the Folsom Culture and continued until around 5,000 years ago. The Old Signal Butte Culture came into existence about 5,000 years ago but these people were not known to have inhabited the Sand Hills region. Between 500 A.D. and 1,300 A.D. three Indian Cultures were found in the Sand Hills: the Sterns Creek, the Mira Creek and the Woodland Cultures. From 1,300 A.D. to 1,600 A.D. the Upper Republican Culture is found throughout the state. Sites in the Sand Hills include one on the Loup River and on some of the Cherry County Lakes. From 1,600 A.D. to 1,800 A.D. the Dismal River Culture was found in the Sand Hills, located near the Middle Loup, North Loup and the Dismal Rivers and in general is found in the west and southwest portions of the state.

After 1,800 A.D. the Pawnee and Sioux tribes claimed the land of the Sand Hills as hunting grounds. The two tribes disputed various tracts between themselves. The Pawnee claimed the drainage area of the Loup River as their hunting grounds and camped near the mouth of the river. The Sioux claimed lands east to the forks of the Platte and north to the mouth of the White River in

South Dakota as their hunting grounds. Both tribes depended on the bison, which roamed the Sand Hills in vast numbers, as their primary source of food and raw material. Between 1854 and 1876 all the territories that the Sioux and the Pawnee claimed as their hunting ground had been acquired by the United States Government through a series of treaties. The final treaty of 1876 opened up the entire Sand Hills region to settlement.

There were no military posts established in Blaine County and there is no record of any skirmishes between settlers in the area and the Native Americans. The settlement of the county did not get into full swing until after the Indians had been out of the area for almost a decade.

Settlement of Nebraska

The area that was to become the State of Nebraska became a United States possession through the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. The first American exploration of the territory commenced on March 14, 1804 with the Lewis and Clark Expedition. Prior to its opening as a territory for settlement, Nebraska was part of the vast area of land set aside for all Native Americans by an act of Congress in 1834. Through a series of conflicts and treaties between the United States and the various Native American Tribes of the region the United States government was able to acquire this area and open it to general settlement by the pioneers. Nebraska Territory was established in 1854 and 13 years later, in 1867, gained statehood. The settlement of Nebraska generally moved across the state from the southeast to the northwest following the routes of the wagon trails, rivers and, later, the railroads. The development of the

railroad was essential to the opening up of Nebraska lands to the tide of settlers.

From its initiation in 1854 until 1862, settlement of the Nebraska Territory was generally done under the provisions of the Pre-Emption Act of 1841. This act allowed a settler to file for up to 160 acres for a fixed price, generally \$1.25 to \$2.50 per acre. Under this act, settlement was limited to the southeast portions of the state; Blaine County, like other Sand Hills counties, was not affected by this act.

The Homestead Act of 1862, which became effective January 1, 1863, allowed a settler to acquire between 40 to 160 acres without paying the standard fee per acre to the federal government. This act required that the homesteader remain on the land for five years and meet a specified minimum level of improvements. It was under this act that the first settlement of the Sand Hills occurred. In Blaine County the first homestead was filed in 1880. The homesteader was often faced with the problem of competition for land with the free-range ranchers who had been developing their enterprises without impediment for the past decade. Various areas experienced rather marked disputes between ranchers and homesteaders.

In 1903 Moses P. Kinkaid, then Nebraska Congressman, introduced an act to Congress that would allow the homesteader to file for up to 640 acres of land as opposed to the usual 160 acres. This act specifically applied to the Sand Hills region of Nebraska. It recognized that the Sand Hills region did not lend itself to 160 acre farms or to the style of farming developed in other areas of Nebraska. The arid Sand Hills required that a greater land area be

utilized to provide the means for successful agricultural and/or ranching endeavors. The act proved to be a boon to the Sand Hills region bringing in its largest group of settlers to date. Various acts followed the Kinkaid Act which, combined with tolerable weather and good luck, brought about the permanent settlement and development of the Sand Hills Region and Blaine County.

The Kinkaid Act was one of the most important elements in the settlement of the Sand Hills region. From 1904 to 1920, the Kinkaid Act resulted in the peak population of the Sand Hills.

Due to the importance of the Homestead and Kinkaid Acts to the northern Sand Hills region, Save America's Heritage has included a more detailed analysis of their impact in the General Summary of Survey Results found in subsequent articles of this report.

The period between 1900 and 1930 was a prosperous one for the Sand Hills and the state in general. Improvements were made in transportation, education, agricultural and government. Populations across the state reached peaked throughout this period with the exception of the eastern counties and those with major communities.

The decade of the Great Depression, the 1930's, was hard on the Sand Hills counties as well as for the state. Many of the "Kinkaiders" left the area at this time. While this was an opportunity for the ranchers to acquire more land, overall economic conditions were difficult. The population in the Sand Hills was in steady decline from the 1930's until the 1960's when it stabilized.

County History

Blaine County, like other Sand Hills counties, was first settled by cattle ranchers prior to the official opening up of the territory to settlement by the federal government. After the Sioux agreed to move onto the reservations in South Dakota in 1876, the Federal Government agreed, as part of the treaty, to provide them with a certain amount of cattle for beef. In the early 1870's, cattlemen from Texas began to recognize the value of the Sand Hills as ranch country and began to bring Longhorn herds from Texas north along the Chisholm trail. Some of the early ranches in Blaine County were the Northup Ranch, the Rankin Ranch, the Field Brothers Ranch, and the Sawyer Ranch. The Northup Ranch was located near the confluence of Goose Creek and the North Loup River in the early 1870's. The Field Brothers Ranch, established near present day Dunning in 1884, was closely associated with the development of that community.

Blaine County's borders were defined by an act of the Legislature approved March 5, 1885 and the county was organized in 1886. The settlement of the county progressed at a moderate rate with an 1890 population of 1,146 persons. The early settlers generally built sod homes in the Sand Hills although some used timber from nearby rivers and streams. Blaine County, along with the rest of the Sand Hills region, experienced a severe drought in the 1890's and the ensuing economic hard times caused many settlers to leave the young county. Numerous plans for irrigation were put forth in the 1890's and some ditches were dug. As conditions improved in the 1900's, however, these plans were forgotten. By 1900 the population of the county had plummeted to 603 people, almost half of its 1890 total.

The passage of the Kinkaid Act in 1904, along with an end of the drought conditions, brought new life into the county. Many "Kinkaiders" came to the county in hopes of establishing new homes and of finding independence. Between 1900 and 1910 the population of the county more than doubled with a total of 1,672 people listed. Numerous post offices were established between 1904 and 1910, another indication of the effects of the Kinkaid Act. Some of the post offices established were: Edith (1907); Scheduling (1907), located in the German Valley area; Pritchard (1905), located in section 29 of range 24, township 24; and Lucy, (1905) located between Brewster and Dunning. These post offices were often centers of social life in their areas even though they were not located in towns or villages. By 1920 the influx of "Kinkaiders" into the county had reached its peak and the census listed a population of 1,778 residents, the highest ever in the county. The drought of the 1930's affected the county adversely and many "Kinkaiders" left the area. At their departure ranchers bought up their lands. The population of Blaine County has steadily declined since 1920 as ranches have been consolidated and youth have left the area to pursue interests other than ranching. By 1980 Blaine County's population was 867, one of the lowest in the state.

Blaine County Towns

Brewster is the county seat of Blaine County and came into existence when George W. Brewster, a civil war veteran, homesteaded at the town site in 1884. Mr. Brewster was a newspaper man and he made early efforts to establish this town as the county seat of Blaine. The post office was established there in

1885 and Mr. Brewster invested a large amount of his own money in the community, building a business block, the North Loup Bridge, and many of the county fair ground buildings. After a battle with Ladora for the county seat Brewster was finally established as such in January of 1888. Ladora was the non-existent town that rancher Washington F. Rankin had hoped to establish and was nothing more than a "paper" town.

Brewster is an inland county seat located somewhat east of the center of the county. The North Loup River flows just to the northeast of the town. Brewster was a wild town in the late 1880's with "Doc Middleton's" saloon and pool hall in town. Mr. Brewster began publishing the Brewster News in 1884; it is now the only paper currently published in the County. In 1887 the first county school was established in Brewster, and today the town is the home of the county high school. In 1890 a Methodist Church was established in Brewster and in 1899 a Congregational Church was established. During the period of development stimulated by the Kinkaid Act (1904-1920) Brewster remained the county seat, however the act did not have a great impact on the community. The town of Dunning, located to the south on the railroad line, became the boom town of the Kinkaid growth period.

Dunning is located in the southwest portion of the county. The community is located on the original Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad. This line runs through the southeast section of the county, and the station located in Dunning was to become one of the largest cattle shipping centers in the area. The post office was established in 1886 and the first school was established in 1887. The Dunning Congregational Church was organized in 1900 and the Dunning

State Bank was incorporated in 1919. A newspaper was established in 1912 but publication did not survive the Great Depression. Dunning expanded greatly after the passage of the Kinkaid Act and reached a peak population in 1920 of 289 residents. Following the boon of the Kinkaid period, the population of Dunning has paralleled the steady decline exhibited by Blaine County as a whole. In 1980 there were 182 residents.

Other communities established in Blaine County include Purdum and Scheduling. Purdum, located in the extreme northwest area of the county, was established in 1885 and its post office is still in operation. The first school in Purdum was held in 1887. The Scheduling post office was established in 1907 and discontinued in 1919 and no built evidence remains. The Methodist Church was established in 1890 and the Purdum State Bank was established in 1914. The community was located in an area known as the "German Valley" and was settled largely by German immigrants. This community is no longer in existence.

Ethnic Groups and Population Trends

Blaine County has never been a densely populated county. In fact, it was one of the least populated counties in the state, and remains sparsely populated to this day with a population, in 1980, of 867 residents. The year 1920 showed the county's peak population of 1,778 residents with 92 people of foreign birth. The effect of the Kinkaid Act was still being felt at that time, with many "Kinkaiders" still in residence. The major ethnic groups to enter Blaine County were the Germans, immigrants from the British Isles, Scandinavians, Hollanders and Canadians. The year of peak foreign born

population was 1890 with 57 persons from Germany, 33 from the British Isles, 30 from Scandinavia and Holland and 16 from Canada.

Blaine county was home to a German settlement known as Scheduling in "German Valley". There were 155 persons of German birth listed on the censuses between 1900 and 1950 with thirty two in 1900, forty seven in 1910, thirty five in 1920, twenty four in 1930, thirteen in 1940 and nine in 1950. This community preserved many aspects of their native culture in their architecture and workmanship. Due to the format of the ethnic and racial statistics in Wayne Wheelers An Almanac of Nationality, Ethnic and Racial Groups (1975), it is impossible to gather the total amount of individuals who immigrated into the county over the years. A thorough examination of the various censuses would be required to give a complete representation of individuals of foreign birth entering the county.

Persons from the British Isles made up the second largest group of foreign born individuals in the county with 135 listed between 1890 and 1950. There were 84 persons of Scandinavian and Dutch birth listed for the same years and 35 of Canadian birth.

Blaine County had a relatively small immigrant population, although the settlement by Germans was significant. Many of the immigrants had come to America prior to their settlement in Blaine County and arrived in the county during the Kinkaid settlement period (1904-1915).

Sand Hills Ranching

Blaine County depends predominantly on ranching as its main form of agricultural enterprise. The entire county is classified in the Sand Hills Range Livestock Production (NeSHPO "Historic Contexts in Nebraska-Topical Listing", 1989, code 08.08). Blaine County produces cattle for beef consumption and some wild hay is grown for feed. Over the years ranches have been consolidated as the population of the region has decreased. Many ranchers currently depend on air transportation in their daily ranching activities. Canals were attempted in the 1890's but were never completed. As current conditions require diversification, many ranchers in the county are again interested in irrigation as a means to provide alternatives to ranching.

Final Comments

Blaine County depends on the cattle industry for its economic stability. The population of the county has remained small throughout the past century and it is likely to remain so. Dunning, and the county seat of Brewster, have become the centers of social and economic life in the county with many ranchers living in or near town and commuting to their ranches. Current efforts are being undertaken to diversify the economy of the county with irrigation for croplands being considered as an alternative to cattle ranching.

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GENERAL SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

Introduction

Any discussion which analyzes the quality or volume of the surveyed properties in Blaine County must include a summary of the environmental conditions which predominate the county. The results of the Historic Buildings Survey are directly linked to the natural environment which existed when the first permanent settlers constructed their domestic and agricultural shelters. The environmental conditions encountered by the settlers of the early 1880's have, in general, changed very little. Therefore, by examining the environmental conditions which exist today, one can gain a better understanding of the factors affecting the creation of the historic built environment in Blaine County.

Blaine County lies in the south-central portion of the Nebraska Sand Hills. The Sand Hills region is a vast and picturesque area of land which stretches across much of northwest and north-central Nebraska. Blaine County is comprised of this topographic type.

The Sand Hills have been appropriately named for they consist primarily of hilly dunes of sand stabilized by grassy covers. The beauty of this area, however, is often deceptive for the Sand Hills can be a harsh and overpowering environment for both human and animal habitation. The historic built environment of Blaine County can be viewed as a physical extension of the climatic and geographic conditions extant within the Sand Hills. The physical creation of human and animal shelters were controlled by the environment in

which those original builders lived. The number and survivability of the historically built properties were, and continue to be, at the mercy of the land and climate. Not only were the number of properties built during the settlement period relatively low, but many of these buildings have failed to survive the harsh climate of the Sand Hills. Of those buildings which did survive, many lack historic integrity due to alteration or deterioration.

In light of the environmental makeup of Blaine County, the numerical results of the survey were not anticipated to be staggering and indeed they were not. In fact, only 63 total properties were documented within the 720 square miles which constitute Blaine County. The breakdown of these 63 properties includes 175 contributing buildings, one contributing structure, 51 contributing objects, and 20 properties judged potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Numerical Summary of Blaine County Reconnaissance Survey

BLAINE COUNTY	TOTAL PROPERTIES	CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS	CONTRIBUTING SITES	CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES	CONTRIBUTING OBJECTS
BL00: Rural	44 (4)	144 (4)	0	1	46
BL01: Brewster	5 (1)	9 (1)	0	0	3
BL02: Dunning	13	20	0	0	2
BL03: Purdum	1	2	0	0	0
TOTALS	63 (5)	175 (5)	0	1	51

Approximated Area of survey Coverage: 142 square miles (90,880 acres)
Numbers in parentheses denote previously surveyed properties.

Compounding the problem of limited resources is the fact that Blaine County was, historically, a very sparsely populated county. Indeed, the greatest population base existed between 1920 and 1930 when the totals reached

a mere 1778 people. In 1980, Blaine County was home to only 867 persons which ranked it among one of the lowest in the state. This 1980 total translates to a sparse density of 1.2 persons per square mile.

Also indicative of the declining population base are the statistics recorded by the agricultural census of 1910, 1935, and 1982 which delineate the number of farms within Blaine County for each of these years. In 1910 there existed 429 operative farmsteads/ranches within the 720 square miles contained by the county. This translates to one farm for every 1.7 square miles of land in the county. The average farm size in Blaine County in this year was already 733 acres versus the statewide norm of only 297 acres. This indicates that the initial permanent settlement of Blaine County in terms of population and distribution was relatively small and dispersed. By 1935, these figures had change significantly. At that time there were only 291 operating ranches (one for every 2.4 square miles) which represents a post-Depression drop of 32%. Likewise, by 1982 there were only 141 farms left in Blaine County. This represents a 67% decline in the number of operating ranches within the 72-year period from 1910 to 1982. This is a devastating reduction--one that was clearly reflected in the low numerical results of the survey and subsequent lack of potentially eligible National Register properties.

In general summary, the Historic Buildings Survey of Blaine County may be viewed as a direct physical extension of the environmental climate of the Nebraska Sand Hills. This environment has dictated the agricultural and economic practices which it will allow and has forces the builders of human and animal shelters to adapt accordingly.

Preliminary Inventory of the Blaine County Historic Buildings Survey

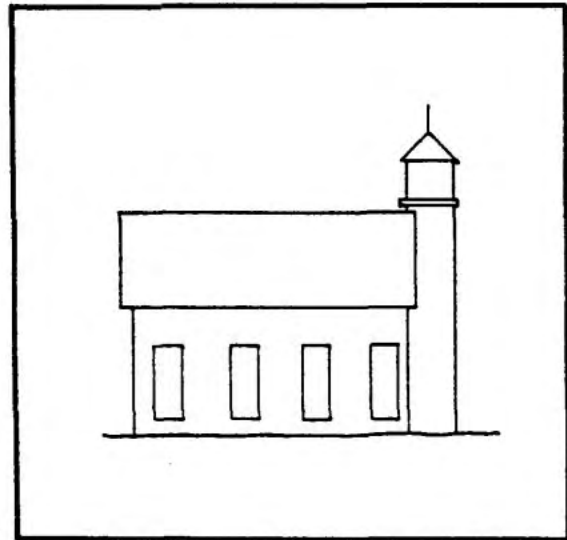
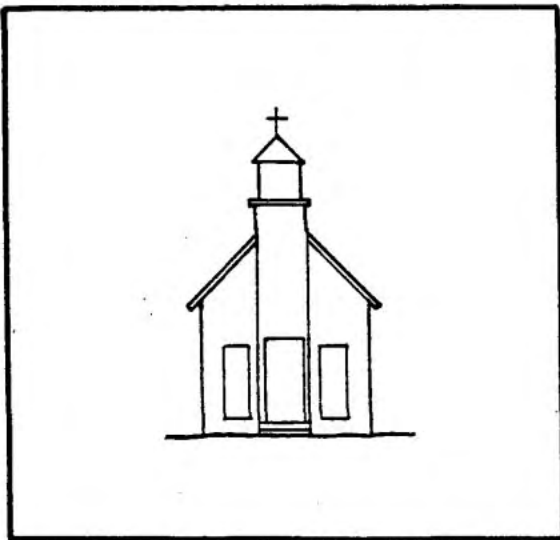
A Topical Discussion and Preliminary Inventory of Blaine County Historic Properties

The following discussion consists of a topical summary and Preliminary Inventory of the historic properties documented during the Blaine County Historic Buildings Survey. This discussion is arranged according to the Topical Listing of Historic Contexts authored by the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office (NeSHPO, 1989). It includes discussion only of those properties potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) or those that contribute to the historic character of Blaine County. Included at the end of each summary is an illustrated inventory of properties which appear potentially eligible for National Register listing in reference to the Historic Context being discussed. Then, located at the end of the Preliminary Inventory, is a listing of properties which also contribute to the historic character of Blaine County but are of second priority with respect to National Register listing. These properties have been labeled "Second Priority Properties" and are included in the Inventory for purposes of defining those buildings that may lack the significance or integrity for NRHP listing but which help define the character of the historic built environment of Blaine County.

Historic Context: Religion (02)

The contextual topic of Religion encompasses any cultural manifestation relative to the faithful devotion of an acknowledged deity. This includes any social entity relating to sacred organizations and rituals or considered a sacred place. In terms of historic buildings and structures, this includes churches, parsonage-rectories, cemeteries, fellowship halls, and schools.

In Blaine County, three properties relating to the context of Religion were recorded by the survey with one property included in the Preliminary Inventory. Located in rural northeast Blaine County, St. John's Lutheran Church (BL00-008) consists of a hall-type frame church constructed in 1948, a parsonage of the same era, and cedar tree landscaping. Collectively this property represents the social and religious practices of the descendants of the nearby "German Valley" settlement.



NeHBS NUMBER: BL00-008

DATE: 1948

RESOURCE NAME: St. John's Lutheran Church

HISTORIC CONTEXT: Religion: (02.03.03)

PROPERTY TYPE: Church (02.1.4), Parsonage (02.4.3)

LOCATION: NE 1/4, NE 1/4, Sec. 21, T. 24 N., R. 22 W., USGS: Goldman Lake SE

TOTAL CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS: 4 **STRUCTURES:** 0

SITES: 0

OBJECTS: 0

Frame church and parsonage considered potentially significant for its role as the focal point of middle and late nineteenth-century religious worship in the "German Valley" of northern Blaine County.

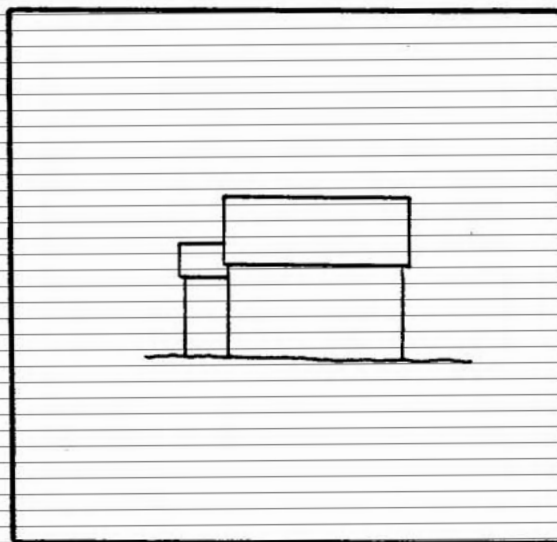
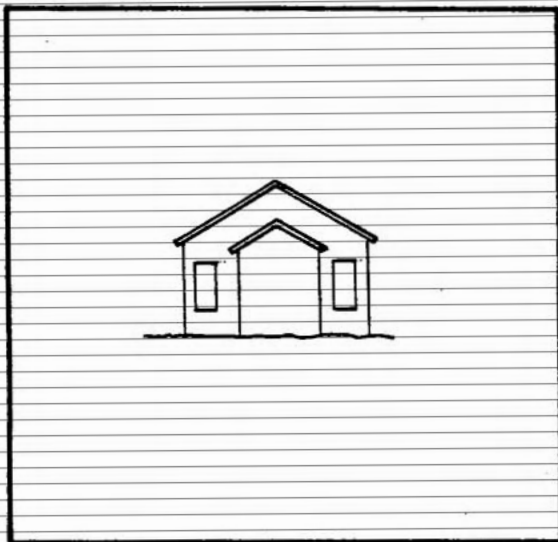
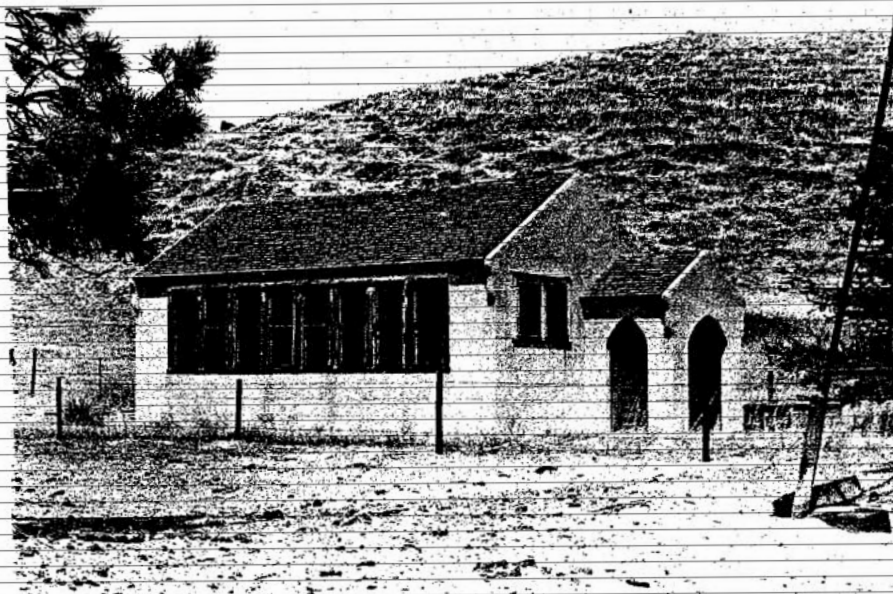
Historic Context: Education (06)

The contextual topic of Education encompasses any act or process which imparts or aids in the acquisition of knowledge. This title is self-explanatory with primary emphasis focused upon the components of schooling and enrichment. Historic buildings which fit this context include schools, libraries and museums. Considerations include formal apprenticeship and enculturation; primary, elementary, junior, and senior high schools, colleges and universities; vocational, adult, continuing, specialty and professional.

The Blaine County survey recorded a total of five education related properties with two of these judged potentially eligible to the National Register. Consistent with the pattern established by previous historic buildings survey projects in Nebraska, the school buildings recorded in Blaine County fit into one of two distinct form types. The first type is a simple unadorned Hall-type building usually constructed of frame materials and containing a rectangular one-room plan. The survivors of this type were found predominantly in the rural environs and appear to have been constructed between the years of 1880 and 1910. They are usually one-story in height with a gable-end entry and were protected by a gable or hip roof placed in longitudinal orientation.

The second predominant form type found in the previous Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey projects conducted by Save America's Heritage is the "modern" school building type which consists generally of larger scale masonry buildings confined primarily to community-based locations. These building types appear

to have been built between the years of 1915 and 1930 and usually consist of a raised basement two-story masonry structure occupying the grounds of a single town block. Rural schoolhouses were more temporary in that if a larger structure was needed a new building was generally constructed and the former building was adaptively-reused for ranching purposes. The nature of the frame Hall-type school tended to represent temporary needs. Cost of such structures were minimal compared to the modern, community-based, educational buildings.



NeHBS NUMBER: BL00-037

DATE: c.1915

RESOURCE NAME: District #14 School

HISTORIC CONTEXT: Education: (06.01.01)

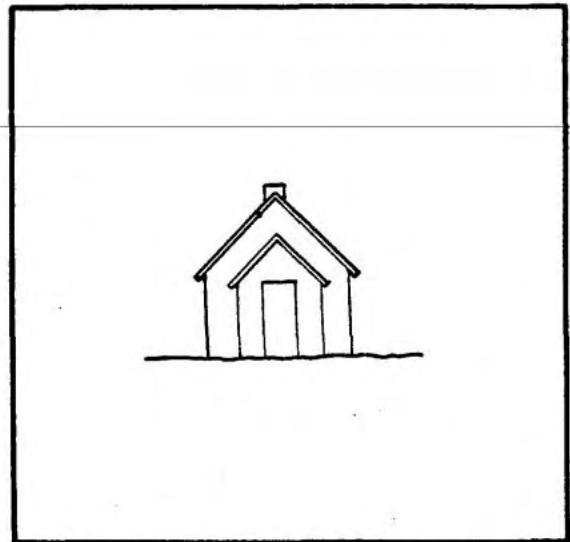
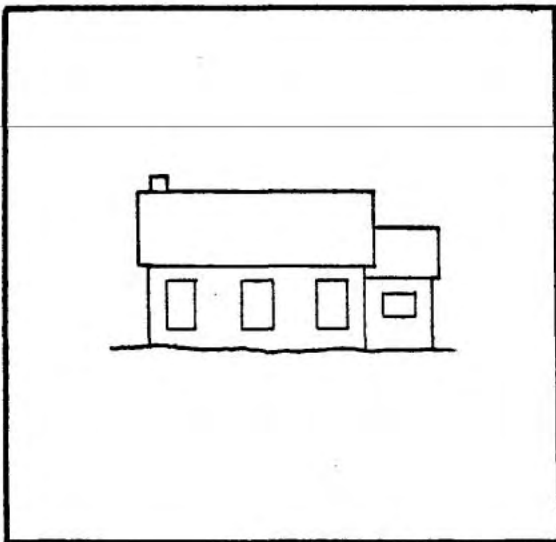
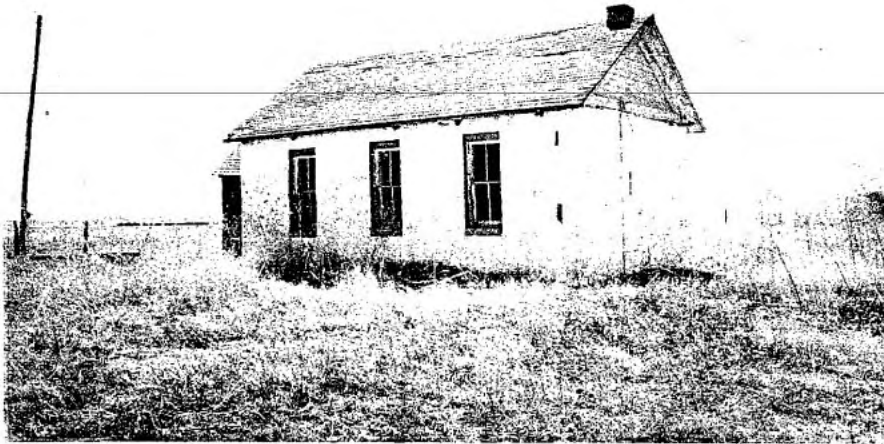
PROPERTY TYPE: Rural Hall Type School (06.3.1:1)

LOCATION: SW 1/4, SE 1/4, Sec. 14, T. 23 N., R. 25 W., USGS: Dunning NW

TOTAL CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS: 1 **STRUCTURES:** 0

SITES: 0 **OBJECTS:** 0

One story stucco hall-type school building included in the Preliminary Inventory as a well-preserved example of early twentieth-century rural education in northwest Blaine County.



NeHBS NUMBER: BL00-026

DATE: c.1912

RESOURCE NAME: "Hawley Flats" District #13 School

HISTORIC CONTEXT: Education: (06.01.01)

PROPERTY TYPE: Rural Hall Type School (06.3.1:1)

LOCATION: NE 1/4, NE 1/4, Sec. 6, T. 23 N., R. 23 W., USGS: Koshopah

TOTAL CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS: 1 **STRUCTURES:** 0

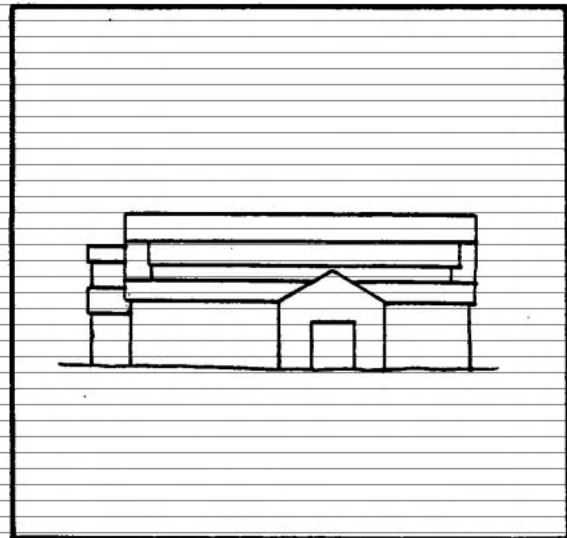
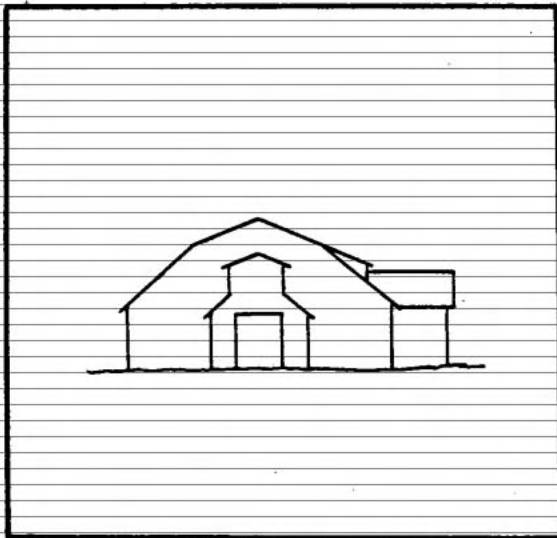
SITES: 0 **OBJECTS:** 0

One-story cement block hall-type school building included in the Preliminary Inventory as a representative example of early twentieth-century rural education in northwest Blaine County.

Historical Context: Diversion (07)

The context of Diversion encompasses any activity which relaxes and amuses. Considerations include recreation and entertainment; sport and travel; participating and spectating. A broad range of properties fall under this context from cultural centers and theatres to nightclubs and houses of ill-repute.

The auditorium in Dunning (BL02-004) is the only building selected for the Blaine County reconnaissance survey under the context of Diversion. This large, gambrel-roofed, public auditorium was constructed in 1938 as a Works Progress Administration (WPA) project for community improvement. The building occupies the west portion of Dunning's city park. In addition to the auditorium are two frame privies which are situated directly south of the main building. BL02-004 retains a high degree of integrity and has been selected Potentially Eligible to the National Register. The Preliminary Inventory for this property follows.



NeHBS NUMBER: BL02-004

DATE: 1938

COMMON NAME: Dunning Auditorium

HISTORIC CONTEXT: Diversion: (07.07)

PROPERTY TYPE: Auditorium (07.1.2)

LOCATION: SEC Jewett Ave. & Bridge St., Dunning.

TOTAL CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS: 3 **STRUCTURES:** 0

SITES: 0 **OBJECTS:** 0

Large stucco auditorium building included in the Preliminary Inventory for association with the Historic Context of Diversion and the Work Progress Administration (W.P.A.) building program.

Historic Context: Agriculture (08)

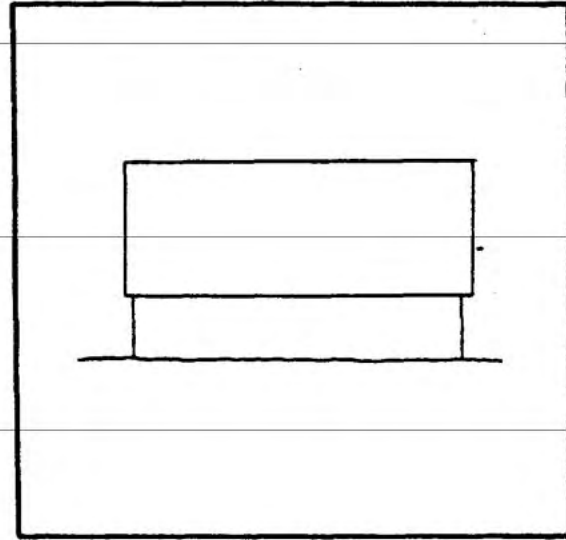
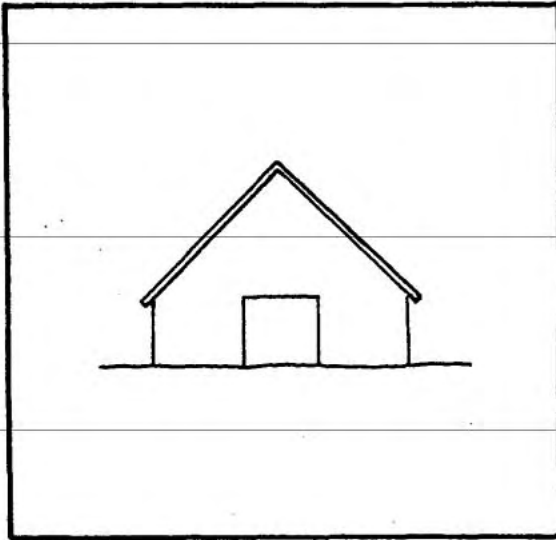
Blaine County lies in the geographic zone known as the Sand Hills. This area is unique to Nebraska and is composed of hilly land of low to high dunes, stabilized by grasses. Historically, the nature of this sandy region has been unsuitable for the cultivation of crops. Instead, the sandhills region has become an area devoted to range livestock production. Most land has remained uncultivated and serves as grass-covered rangeland for cattle. The context of Agriculture was a primary contributor to the historic settlement of Blaine County. With a total of 25 agriculture-related properties surveyed, the Historic Context of Agriculture accounts for forty-three percent of the properties recorded by the Historic Buildings Survey of Blaine County. These 25 properties include 112 contributing buildings, one contributing structure, and 34 contributing objects.

The ranches of this region played an important part in the history of the Sand Hills. The cattle-raising industry was a primary factor in the settlement and economic development of Blaine County during the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century. The vast majority of land in this county has been reserved for the grazing of cattle. The majority of ranches in this area contain the basic buildings necessary for domestic living and cattle production. Typical historic ranch buildings include the main living quarters, hay/horse and cattle barns, granaries, cribs, implement sheds, loafing sheds, stock pens, tool sheds, chicken houses, cellars and storage buildings. Another important building found on the historic cattle ranches was the bunkhouse. These

buildings were typically one story gable roof structures sheathed in clapboard or stucco.

Many of the more prosperous ranches tended to exhibit modern changes made to the physical components of the ranch. Most noticeably were the alterations made to the main house or the construction of a new main house.

The Preliminary Inventory for the Historic Context of Agriculture in Blaine County is comprised of seven total properties. This number represents twenty-eight percent of the 25 agriculture-related properties recorded by the Historic Buildings Survey of Blaine County. A breakdown of the seven potentially eligible properties shows 50 contributing buildings and 13 contributing objects. In addition, two ranches have been selected for Second Priority status.



NeHBS NUMBER: BL00-006

DATE: c.1905

COMMON NAME: Ranch (Abandoned)

HISTORIC CONTEXT: Agriculture: (08.08)

PROPERTY TYPE: Ranch (08.1)

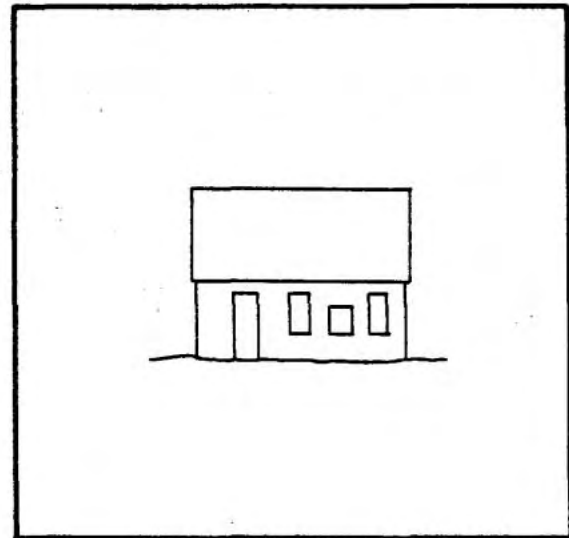
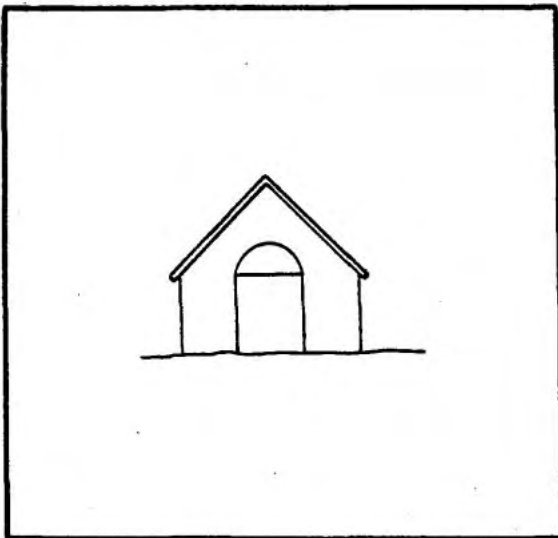
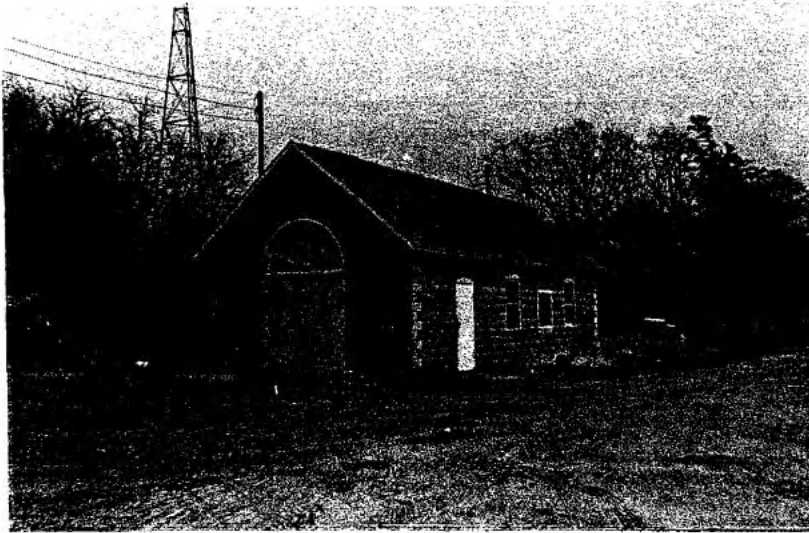
LOCATION: NW 1/4, NE 1/4, Sec. 27, T. 24 N., R. 22 W., USGS Golden Lake SE

TOTAL CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS: 6 **STRUCTURES:** 0

SITES: 0

OBJECTS: 3

Potentially significant for association with Sand Hills Range Livestock Production as evidenced by the collection of well-preserved early twentieth-century cattle producing buildings.



NeHBS NUMBER: BL00-010

DATE: 1918

COMMON NAME: Frederick Schneidereit Ranch

HISTORIC CONTEXT: Agriculture: (08.08)

PROPERTY TYPE: Ranch (08.1)

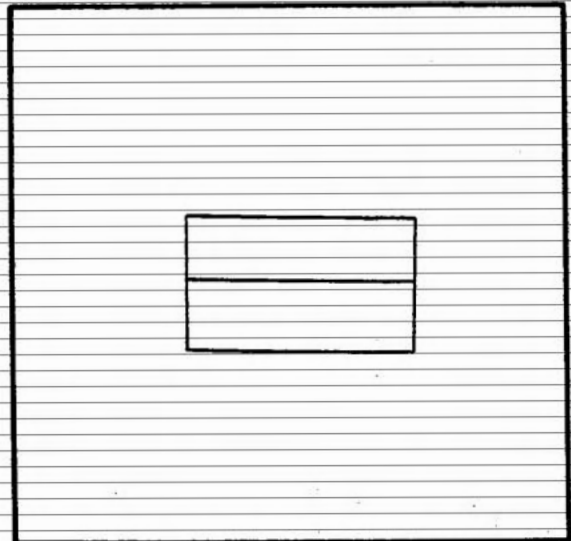
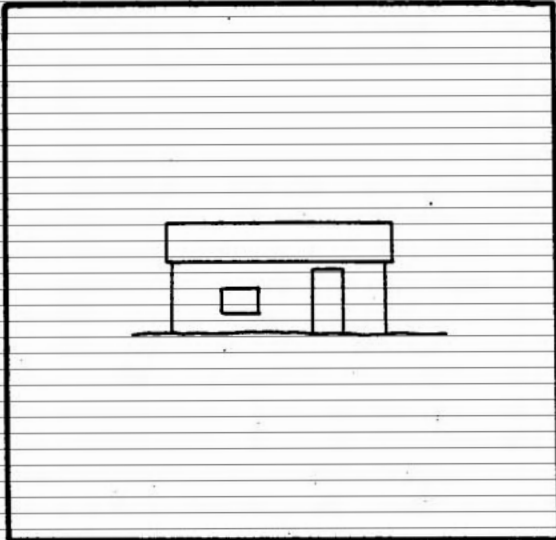
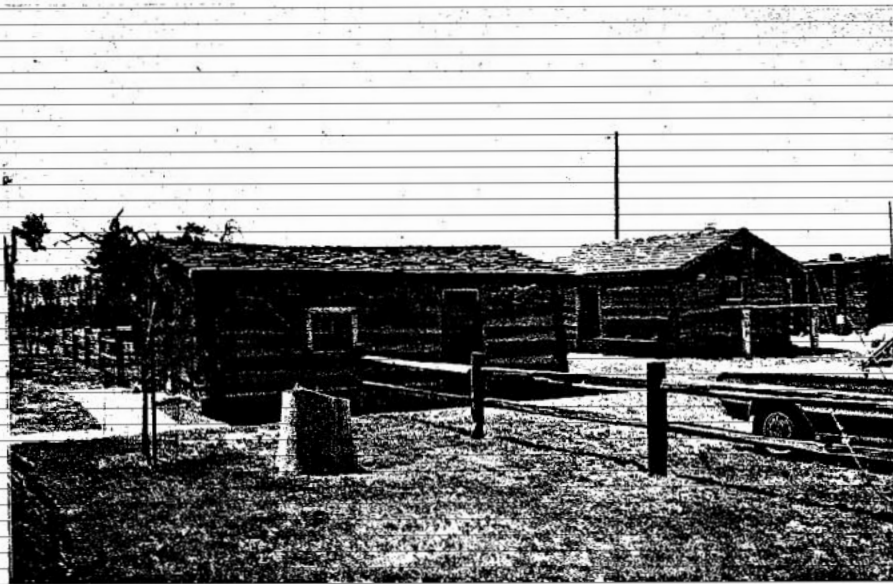
LOCATION: SW 1/4, SW 1/4, Sec. 12, T. 24 N., R. 23 W., USGS Golden Lake

TOTAL CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS: 19 **STRUCTURES:** 0

SITES: 0

OBJECTS: 3

Included in the Preliminary Inventory for the significant collection of historic domestic and agriculture buildings constructed by Prussian-born immigrant Frederick Schneidereit.



NeHBS NUMBER: BL00-019

DATE: c.1910

RESOURCE NAME: Washington Rankin Ranch

HISTORIC CONTEXT: Agriculture: (08.08)

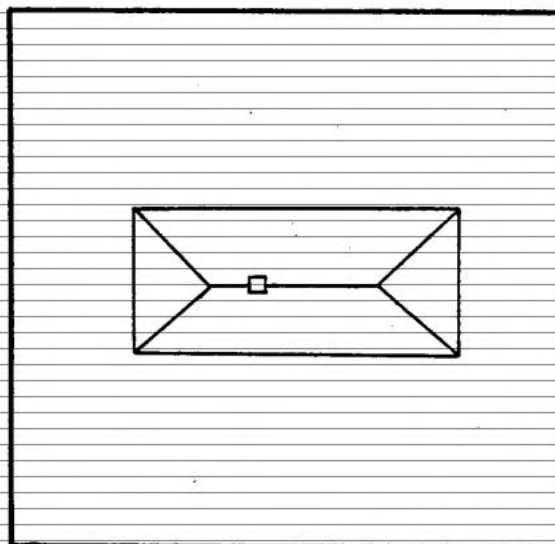
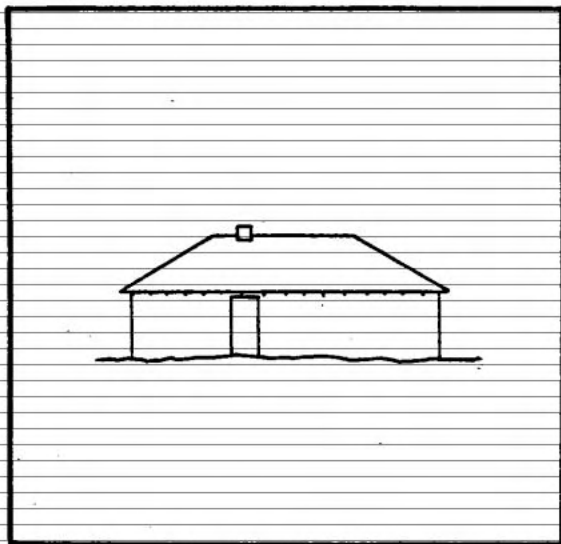
PROPERTY TYPE: Ranch (08.1)

LOCATION: NW 1/4, NW 1/4, Sec. 33, T. 21 N., R. 21 W., USGS: Brewster SE

TOTAL CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS: 6 **STRUCTURES:** 0

SITES: 0 **OBJECTS:** 3

Included in the Preliminary Inventory for association with Sand Hills Range Livestock Production and for the presence of two well-preserved circa 1880 log houses linked to ranch founder Washington Rankin.



NeHBS NUMBER: BL00-023

DATE: c.1895

COMMON NAME: Ranch (Abandoned)

HISTORIC CONTEXT: Agriculture: (08.08), Settlement: (16.01)

PROPERTY TYPE: Ranch (08.1)

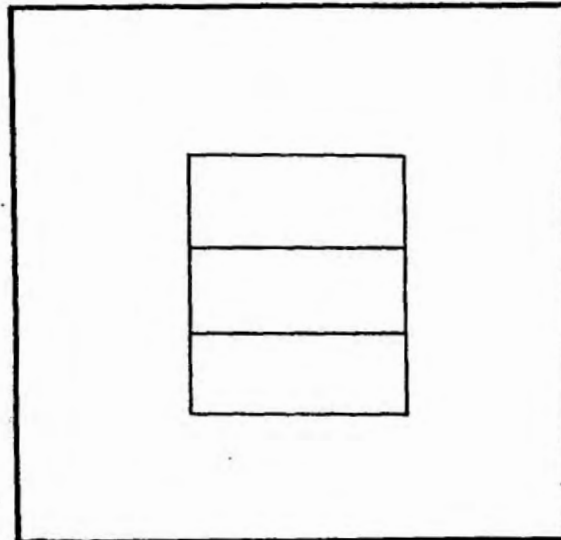
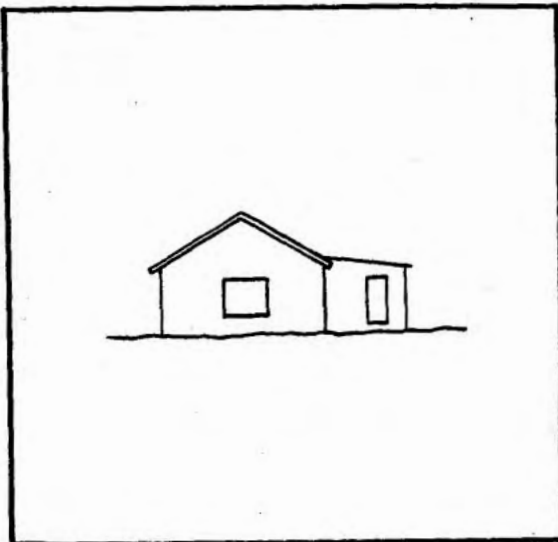
LOCATION: SE 1/4, NE 1/4, Sec. 4, T. 22 N., R. 22 W., USGS: Brewster

TOTAL CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS: 9 **STRUCTURES:** 0

SITES: 0

OBJECTS: 3

Abandoned sod house and outbuildings included in the Inventory as an exceptionally well-preserved example of sod "brick" construction technology. Additional significance derived through possible association with Kinkaid Act homestead settlement and Sand Hills Range Livestock Production.



NeHBS NUMBER: BL00-029

DATE: 1940

COMMON NAME: Dean Herish Sod House

HISTORIC CONTEXT: Agriculture: (08.08),

PROPERTY TYPE: Ranch (08.1)

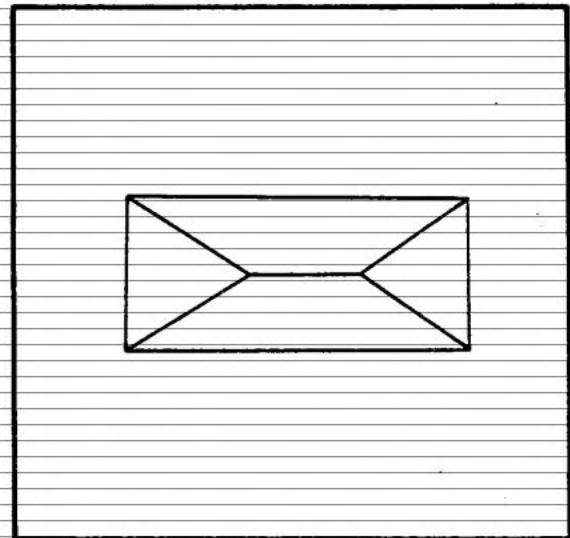
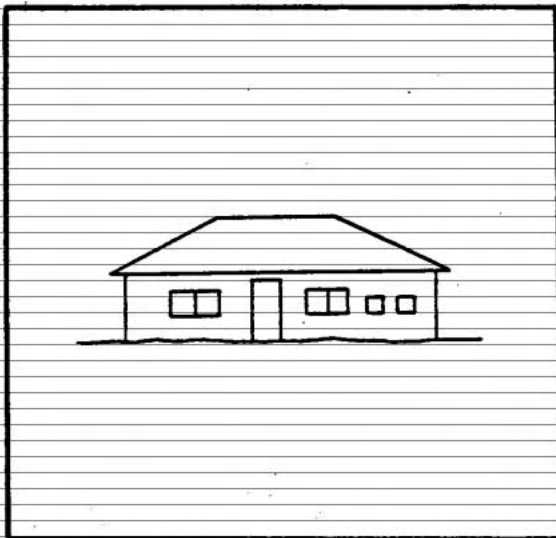
LOCATION: NE 1/4, NW 1/4, Sec. 34, T. 24 N., R. 24 W., USGS: Koshopah

TOTAL CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS: 2 **STRUCTURES:** 0

SITES: 0

OBJECTS: 0

The Dean Herish Sod House is considered potentially significant as an example of the "second generation" (1935-45) sod house building phase evident in the northern Sand Hills study region.



NeHBS NUMBER: BL00-041

DATE: c.1905

RESOURCE NAME: Lawrence Thompson Ranch

HISTORIC CONTEXT: Agriculture: (08.08), Settlement: (16.01)

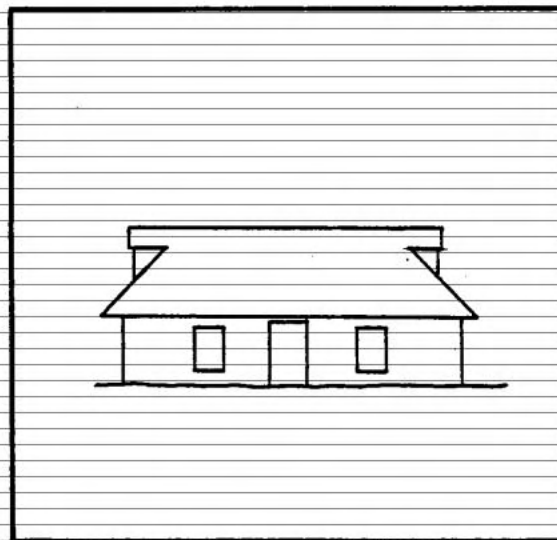
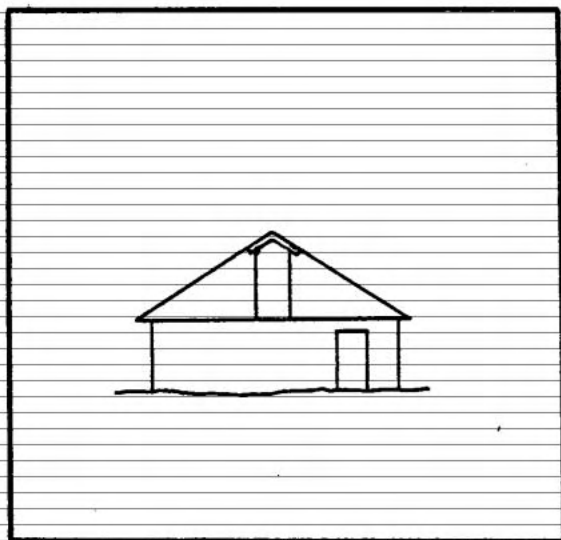
PROPERTY TYPE: Ranch (08.1)

LOCATION: NE 1/4, NE 1/4, Sec. 13, T. 21 N., R. 25 W., USGS: Dunning SW

TOTAL CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS: 6 **STRUCTURES:** 0

SITES: 0 **OBJECTS:** 1

Abandoned circa 1905 sod house and two circa 1940 barns included in the Preliminary Inventory for possible association with Sand Hills Range Livestock Production and Kinkaid Act homestead settlement.



NeHBS NUMBER: BL00-018

DATE: 1906

RESOURCE NAME: William P. Gladson Sod House

HISTORIC CONTEXT: Agriculture: (08.08), Settlement: (16.01)

PROPERTY TYPE: Ranch (08.1)

LOCATION: NW 1/4, NE 1/4, Sec. 23, T. 21 N., R. 21 W., USGS: Almeria SW

TOTAL CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS: 2 **STRUCTURES:** 0

SITES: 0

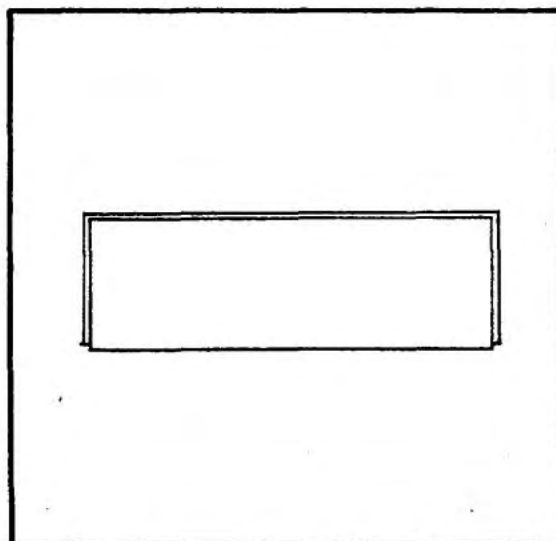
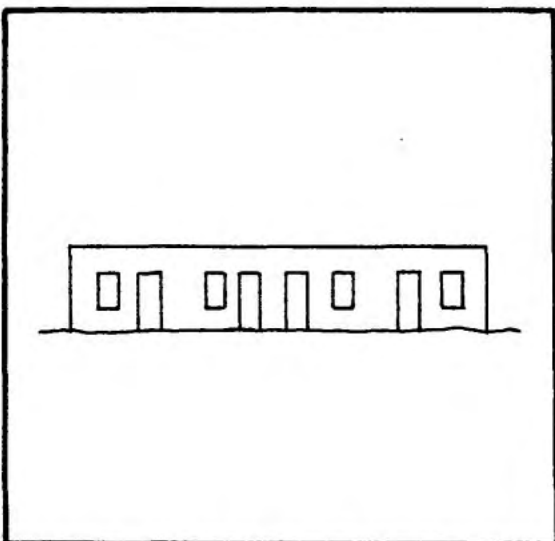
OBJECTS: 0

The William P. Gladson Sod House is an excellent example of sod "brick" construction technology and is potentially significant for possible association with Sand Hills Range Livestock Production and Kinkaid Act homestead settlement.

Historic Context: Transportation (13)

The context of Transportation involves the carrying, moving or conveying of material and people from one place to another. Considerations include transportation by land, water, and air; trails, roads, highways, interstates, rail; related service accommodations such as motels, service stations, and drive-ins.

BL00-043 is the only property catalogued on the reconnaissance level for the context of Transportation in Blaine County. This property consists of a circa 1915 stucco house situated towards the front of the lot and surrounded by cedar trees. Behind the main house are two motel units which were added later. Both units are rectangular in plan and contain a string of connecting rooms. One of the motel buildings contains four units and the other contains two units. Each unit is made identifiable by a small decorative gable moulding above each entrance door. BL00-043 represents the early transition of overnight lodging from single cabins to connected units. The visual characteristics of the location suggest the conversion of a single family property to a commercial oriented business. All three contributing buildings remain in good condition but the motel structures on the property no longer appear to serve their original purpose.



NeHBS NUMBER: BL00-043

DATE: c.1938

COMMON NAME: Motel

HISTORIC CONTEXT: Transportation: (13.02)

PROPERTY TYPE: Motel (12.3.2)

LOCATION: NW 1/4, NE 1/4, Sec. 4, T. 21 N., R. 24 W., USGS: Dunning

TOTAL CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS: 3 **STRUCTURES:** 0

SITES: 0

OBJECTS: 1

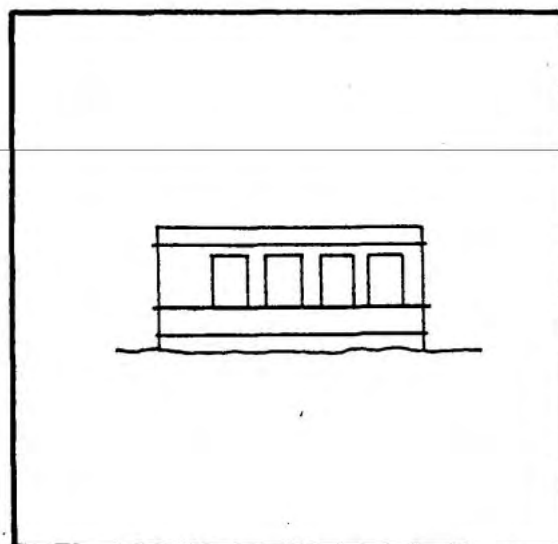
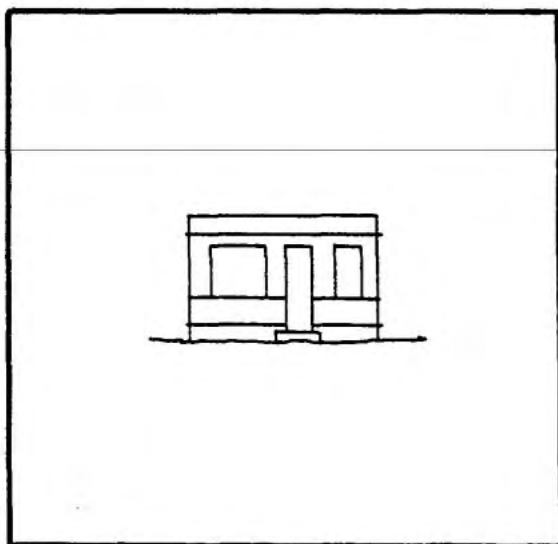
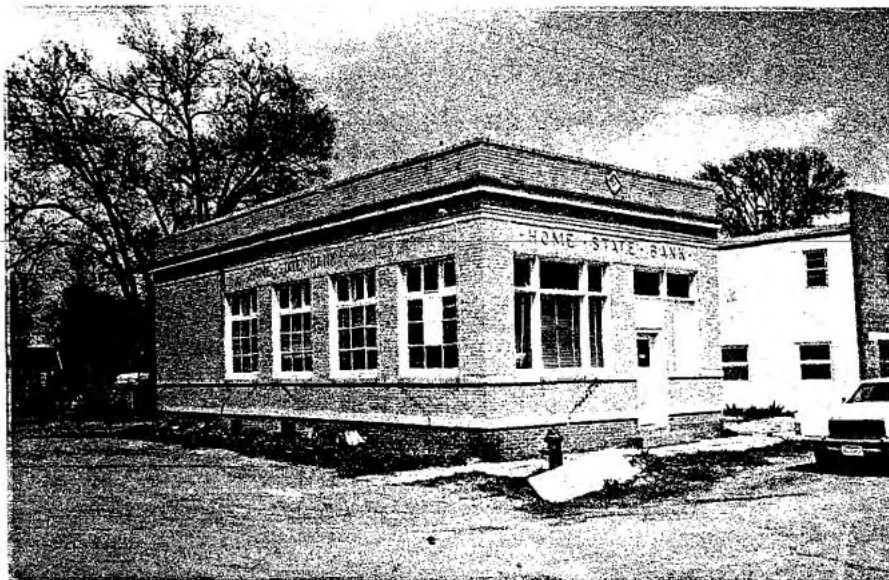
Small scale motel complex consisting of two stucco motel units and stucco house/office building. Judged potentially significant for its association to the Historic Context of Transportation and retention of roadside motel aesthetic.

Historic Context: Services (15)

Primary support services provided or controlled by government, commonly viewed as necessities is the basis for topics and subtopics under the Historic Context of Service. In addition to public services such as health care or certain utilities, private professional services are also considered under this context. Some examples include the professional practice of architecture, insurance, or banking.

One Service related property was documented by the reconnaissance level survey of Blaine County. The total number of documented properties fitting the context of Service is consistent in comparison to other counties in that a relatively low number of these types were recorded. The nature of service related entities does not lend itself to producing a large number of associated properties. For example, the small communities of Blaine County were capable of supporting the establishment of a limited number of banking institutions. Likewise, only one public or private utility company was adequate for supplying the limited demands of the more sparsely populated regions of the county. Consequently, it is not surprising that only one Service related property was recorded out of the 58 total properties recorded by the Historic Buildings Survey of Blaine County.

The Home State Bank (BL02-001) is located in the town of Dunning. This small brick building has been selected Potentially Eligible to the National Register and is further discussed in the following Preliminary Inventory.



NeHBS NUMBER: BL02-001

DATE: c.1918

RESOURCE NAME: Home State Bank

HISTORIC CONTEXT: Service: (15.05)

PROPERTY TYPE: Bank (15.1.1)

LOCATION: NEC Jewett & Carney, Dunning

TOTAL CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS: 1

STRUCTURES: 0

SITES: 0

OBJECTS: 0

Well-preserved one story brick bank building considered potentially significant as a representative of early twentieth-century financial services in southwest Blaine County.

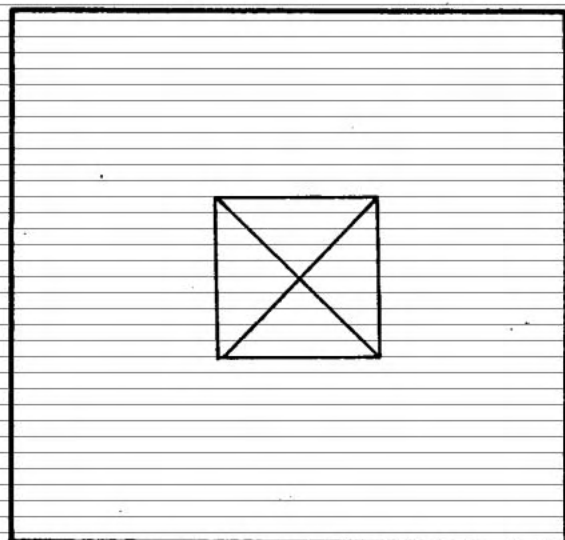
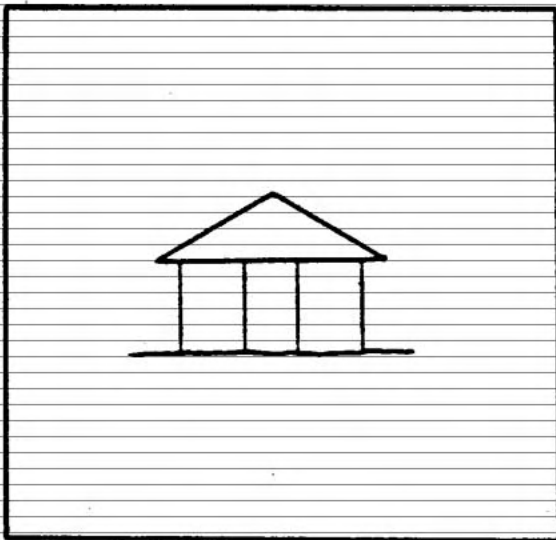
Historic Context: Settlement Systems (16)

Settlement Systems is the broad contextual title encompassing the division, acquisition, and ownership of land. This theme contains all patterns generated through political, religious, or commercial activities to facilitate the establishment of cultural systems. Specific considerations include acquisition methods and use patterns of land as well as the spatial delineation of lands such as landscape architecture, hamlets, villages towns cities and rural systems.

Of the 59 total properties documented in Blaine County, 23 or thirty-nine percent fall within the theme of Settlement Systems. This percentage appears consistent with other northern Sand Hills counties within the study area. Though the context of Settlement for Blaine County constitutes the highest number of recorded sites, many properties suffered from lack of historic integrity. This usually resulted from alterations made to the building's original historic fabric. Common changes include alterations to fenestration, exterior siding, and additions or removal of appendages such as porches. "Improvements" to the majority of these circa 1910 dwellings occurred over decades of stylistic trends and modern advances. Through time we must constantly evaluate non-original alterations. For example, asbestos siding which was once considered lacking in historical merit has recently been considered for its validity. On the other side of the issue of Settlement properties are those buildings which remain extremely similar to their original

condition. This condition results from two main sources. The first is the awareness of property owners towards the retention of historic integrity. In some cases, the owners of historic buildings have made a definitive commitment to the preservation of the historic character of their buildings. The second reason for a dwelling to have retained its historic character is more indirect. Properties which were abandoned were left to serve no immediate purpose and thus no adaptive alterations were performed on the structure. In addition, the financial considerations of remodeling often deterred the property owner and helped contribute to the retention of historic integrity.

The majority of the 23 settlement system properties recorded in Blaine County appeared in two basic manifestations: 1) the simple, unadorned vernacular house, and 2) the Bungalow style house. The vernacular house type usually consisted of small scale rectangular or square-shaped frame buildings covered with exterior stucco sheathings and protected by gable or hip roofs. This house type was generally constructed during the early settlement period of 1884 to 1914. The Bungalow style houses appeared in both front-gable and side-gable versions and were considerably larger in scale than the vernacular houses. The general period of construction for these buildings ranged from 1915 to 1929. Noticeably absent from the pool of settlement system properties of Blaine County were the so-called "High Style" houses.



NeHBS NUMBER: BL00-027

DATE: c.1905

COMMON NAME: Sod House (Abandoned)

HISTORIC CONTEXT: Settlement: (16.01), Agriculture: (08.08)

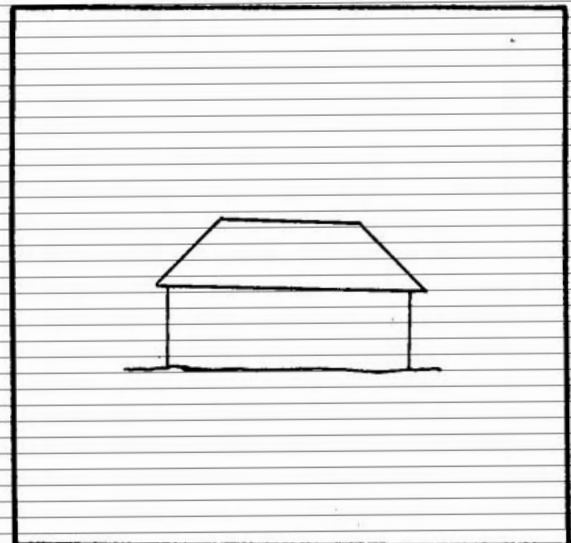
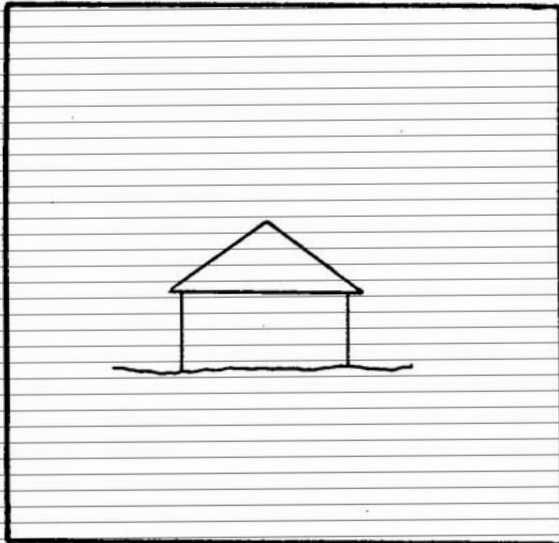
PROPERTY TYPE: Ranch (08.1)

LOCATION: SW 1/4, SW 1/4, Sec. 29, T. 24 N., R. 23 W., USGS: Koshopah

TOTAL CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS: 2 **STRUCTURES:** 0

SITES: 0 **OBJECTS:** 0

Despite its current state of deterioration, this abandoned sod house is significant for possible association with Kinkaid Act homestead settlement and Sand Hills Range Livestock Production.



NeHBS NUMBER: BL01-005

DATE: c.1908

COMMON NAME: House

HISTORIC CONTEXT: Settlement: (16.01)

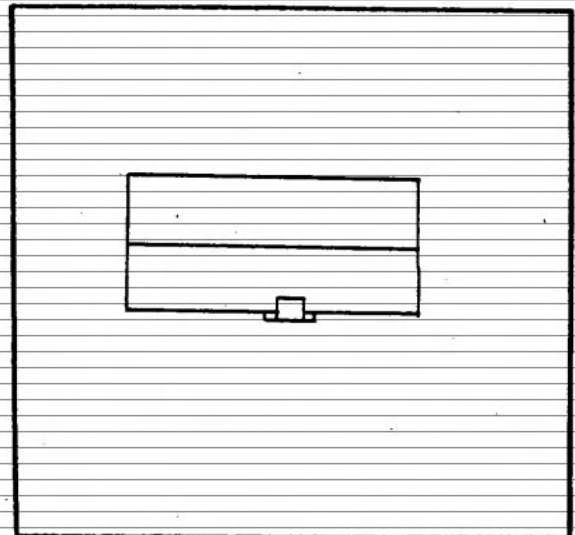
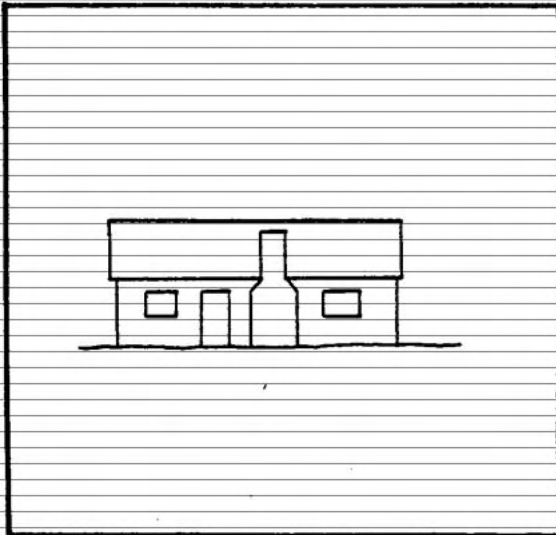
PROPERTY TYPE: Single Family Dwelling (16.5.1)

LOCATION: SWC Paddock & Lincoln Ave., Brewster

TOTAL CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS: 3 **STRUCTURES:** 0

SITES: 0 **OBJECTS:** 1

One-story cement block house included in the Preliminary Inventory as a locally significant representative of early twentieth-century settlement and for use of masonry construction technology.



NeHBS NUMBER: BL00-033

DATE: c.1940

RESOURCE NAME: Fred Hartley Sod House

HISTORIC CONTEXT: Settlement: (16.01), Agriculture: (08)

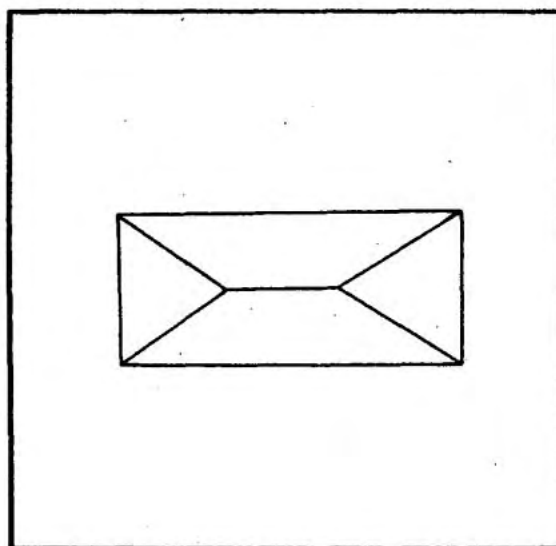
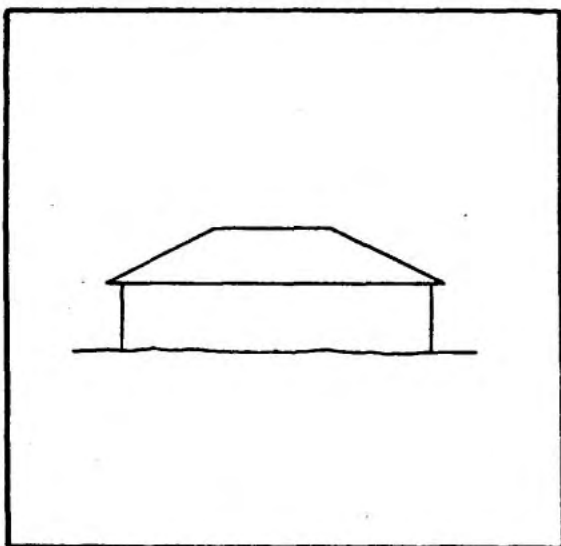
PROPERTY TYPE: Ranch (08.1)

LOCATION: SE 1/4, SE 1/4, Sec. 33, T. 22 N., R. 24 W., USGS: Dunning

TOTAL CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS: 1 **STRUCTURES:** 0

SITES: 0 **OBJECTS:** 0

The Hartley Sod House is a significant and well-preserved example of the "second generation" (1935-45) sod house building phase evident in the northern Sand Hills study region.



NeHBS NUMBER: BL00-034

DATE: c.1900

RESOURCE NAME: William Harris Sod House

HISTORIC CONTEXT: Settlement: (16.01), Agriculture: (08.08)

PROPERTY TYPE: Ranch (08.1)

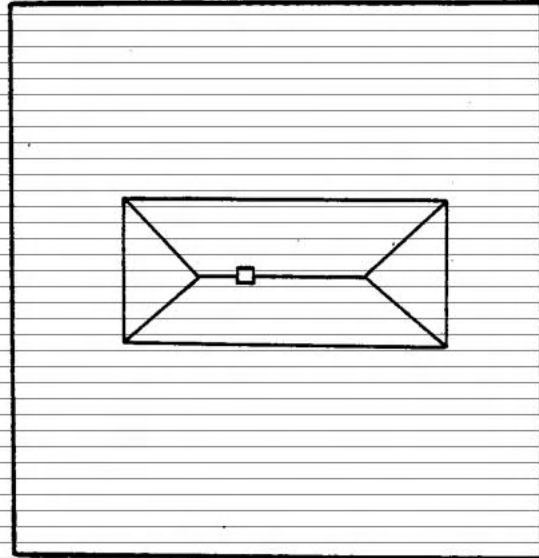
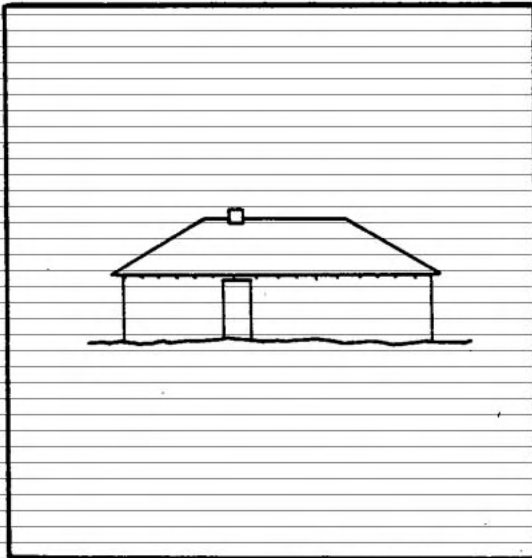
LOCATION: SE 1/4, SE 1/4, Sec. 2, T. 22 N., R. 25 W., USGS: Dunning NW

TOTAL CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS: 1 **STRUCTURES:** 0

SITES: 0

OBJECTS: 1

Despite its current state of deterioration, the Harris Sod House is included in the Preliminary Inventory as a future research property with possible association to Kinkaid Act homestead settlement and Sand Hills Range Livestock Production.



NeHBS NUMBER: BL00-036

DATE: c.1903

RESOURCE NAME: Buck Minister Homestead & Sod House

HISTORIC CONTEXT: Settlement: (16.01), Agriculture: (08.08)

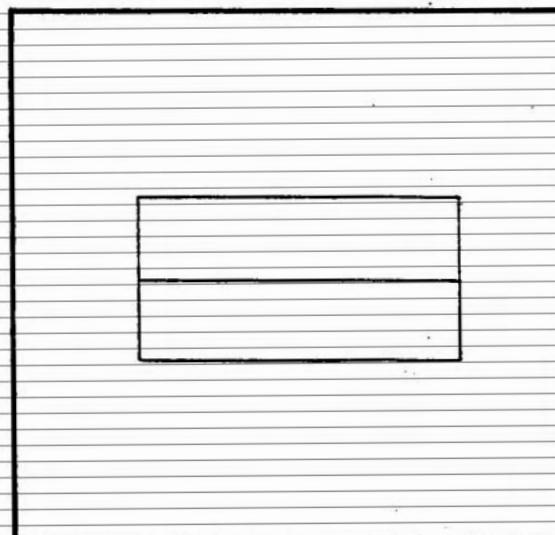
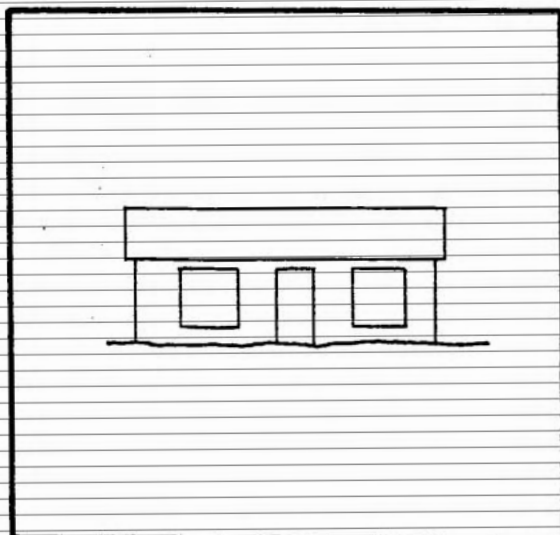
PROPERTY TYPE: Ranch (08.1)

LOCATION: SE 1/4, SE 1/4, Sec. 24, T. 23 N., R. 25 W., USGS: Dunning NW

TOTAL CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS: 3 **STRUCTURES:** 0

SITES: 0 **OBJECTS:** 3

Despite its current deteriorated condition, the Buck Minister ("Yellow Kid") Sod House is potentially significant for association with Kinkaid Act Homestead settlement and as an example of sod "brick" construction technology.



NeHBS NUMBER: BL00-026

DATE: c.1930

RESOURCE NAME: Lister clay house

HISTORIC CONTEXT: Settlement: (16.01)

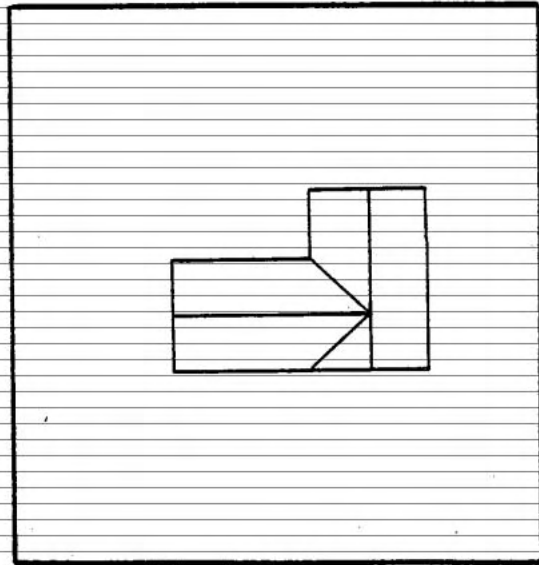
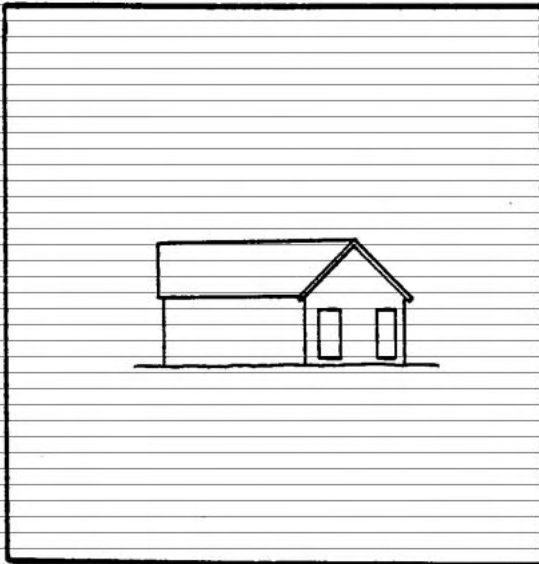
PROPERTY TYPE: Single Family Dwelling: (16.5.1)

LOCATION: NW 1/4, NE 1/4, Sec. 22, T. 23 N., R. 22 W., USGS: Brewster

TOTAL CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS: 1 **STRUCTURES:** 0

SITES: 0 **OBJECTS:** 0

The Lister clay house is considered potentially significant as an example of the "second generation" (1930-40) sod house building phase evident in the northern Sand Hills study region. Purportedly made from sod and hay mixture.



NeHBS NUMBER: BL02-012

DATE: c.1910

COMMON NAME: Abandoned House

HISTORIC CONTEXT: Settlement: (16.01)

PROPERTY TYPE: Single Family Dwelling: (16.5.1)

LOCATION: NEC Railroad St. & Carney St., Dunning.

TOTAL CONTRIBUTING BUILDINGS: 2 **STRUCTURES:** 0

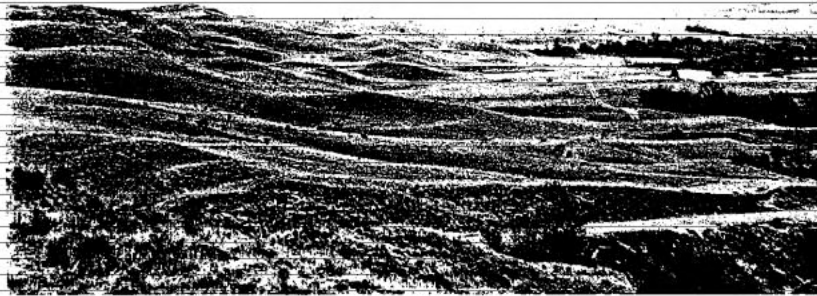
SITES: 0 **OBJECTS:** 0

This small scale cement block building is included in the Preliminary Inventory as a future research property.

BLAINE COUNTY SECOND PRIORITY PROPERTIES BY HISTORIC CONTEXT NUMERIC SEQUENCE

NeHBS NUMBER	DATE	COMMON NAME	HISTORIC CONTEXT	BLDG.	CONTRIBUTING			PROPERTY TYPE
					SI.	ST.	OB.	
BL00-009	C1925	SCHNEIDEREIT RANCH	08.08	7	0	1	0	08.1
BL00-021	C1903	ABANDONED RANCH	08.08	3	0	0	1	08.1
BL02-003	C1900	HOUSE	16.01	2	0	0	0	16.5.1
BL02-007	C1908	HOUSE	16.01	1	0	0	1	16.5.1
BL02-008	C1900	HOUSE	16.01	1	0	0	0	16.5.1
BL02-011	C1895	HOUSE	16.01	1	0	0	0	16.5.1
BL02-013	C1910	HOUSE	16.01	2	0	0	0	16.5.1
BL00-024	C1885	ABANDONED DUGOUT	16.01	1	0	0	0	16.5

SAND HILLS RANGE LIVESTOCK PRODUCTION



Introduction

Nebraska is a state of great diversity. Diversities exist among its people, its lands, its topography and, of more immediate concern to this discussion, its agriculture. The agricultural diversity of the state of Nebraska has been forged through one hundred years of adaptation and evolution in a land once labeled the "Great American Desert". Since that time, the "desert" waste of Nebraska has been transformed into some of the most productive farm and ranch land in the United States.

The pattern for the diverse agricultural setting in Nebraska was primarily established between 1870 and 1930. The study of the various agricultural practises in Nebraska was first addressed in the 1930's by scientists from the University of Nebraska College of Agriculture. Their efforts focused upon the

definition of "system-of-farming areas" and were published in Research Bulletins issued by the College of Agriculture Experiment Station. The two specific bulletins which focus on the definition of the types-of-farming areas are Research Bulletin Number 244, Types of Farming in Nebraska, by Harold Hedges and F.F. Elliott (May 1930), and Research Bulletin Number 299, Factors determining Type of farming Areas in Nebraska, by L.F. Garey (May 1936). The conclusions derived by these authors regarding the spatial distribution of the farming areas has generally held true to the present day as evidenced by the conclusions of James Williams and Doug Murfield in their Agricultural Atlas of Nebraska, (University of Nebraska Press, 1977).

The term type-of-farming is used to describe a group of farms which are similar in size and enterprise combination. In this way, a group of farms having the same kind, quantity, and proportion of crops and livestock may be said to be following the same type of farming (Hedges and Elliott, pp. 3). Likewise, the term type-of-farming area, refers to an area within which there is a high degree of uniformity in the agricultural production and in the physical and economic conditions under which production takes place (Hedges and Elliott, p. 3).

The boundaries of the type areas defined by the above-mentioned authors do not conform to the county boundaries imposed by state government. Instead, Figure 5 shows a more accurate division of the state into nine regions which are distinct from each other in the nature of their cropping and livestock systems (Hedges and Elliott, p. 21). These nine regions have been designated

as type-of-farming areas and have been individually labeled with titles indicating both predominant agriculture and geography.

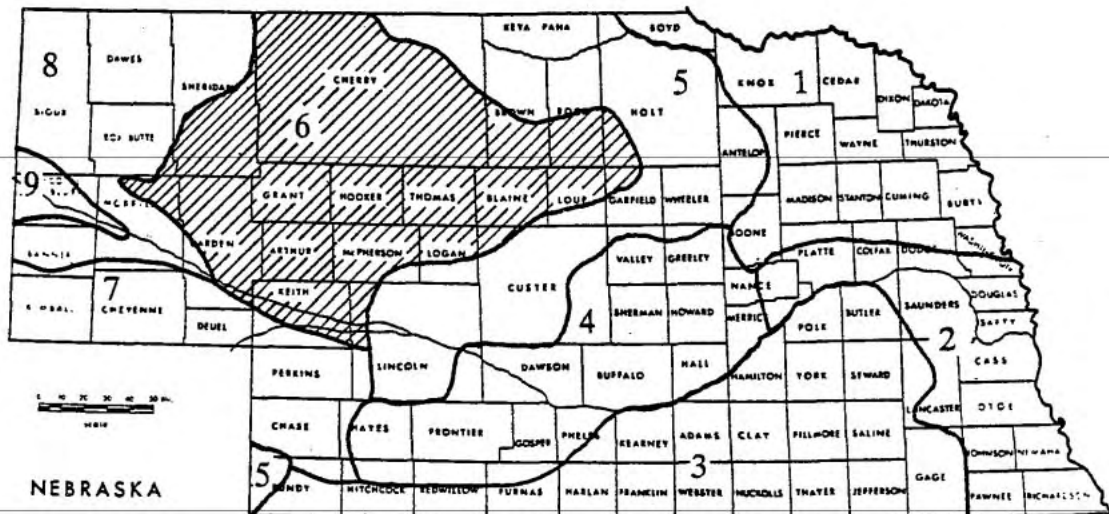


Fig. 5. Type-of-Farming regions for the state of Nebraska.

The nine areas defined by Hedges and Elliott are; 1). the Northeast Nebraska Intensive Livestock Production Area, 2). the Southeastern General Farming Area, 3). the Southern Cash Grain and Livestock Area, 4). the Central Corn and Livestock Area, 5). the Central Hay and Livestock Area, 6). the Sand Hill Cattle Ranching Area, 7). the Southwestern Wheat Area, 8). the High Plains Small Grain and Grazing Area, 9). the Irrigated Area.

No sharply defined boundary lines can be drawn between the areas. In most cases, the transition from one area to another is gradual. The differences lie mainly in the dominant enterprises and their relative importance in the

farming systems (Hedges and Elliott, p. 22).

As evidenced by the map illustrated in Figure number 5, the type-of-farming area which blankets the northern Nebraska Sand Hills Historic Buildings Survey area has been defined as the Sand Hills Cattle Ranching Area. The historical development of the Sand Hills cattle ranching industry is marked by a long and often colorful set of events and people. However, the historical summary of the Sand Hills Cattle Ranching industry has been deferred to a later point in an effort to focus upon the fundamental definition of this farming-type and the resulting set of historic buildings associated with its production.

Sand Hills Cattle Ranching Area

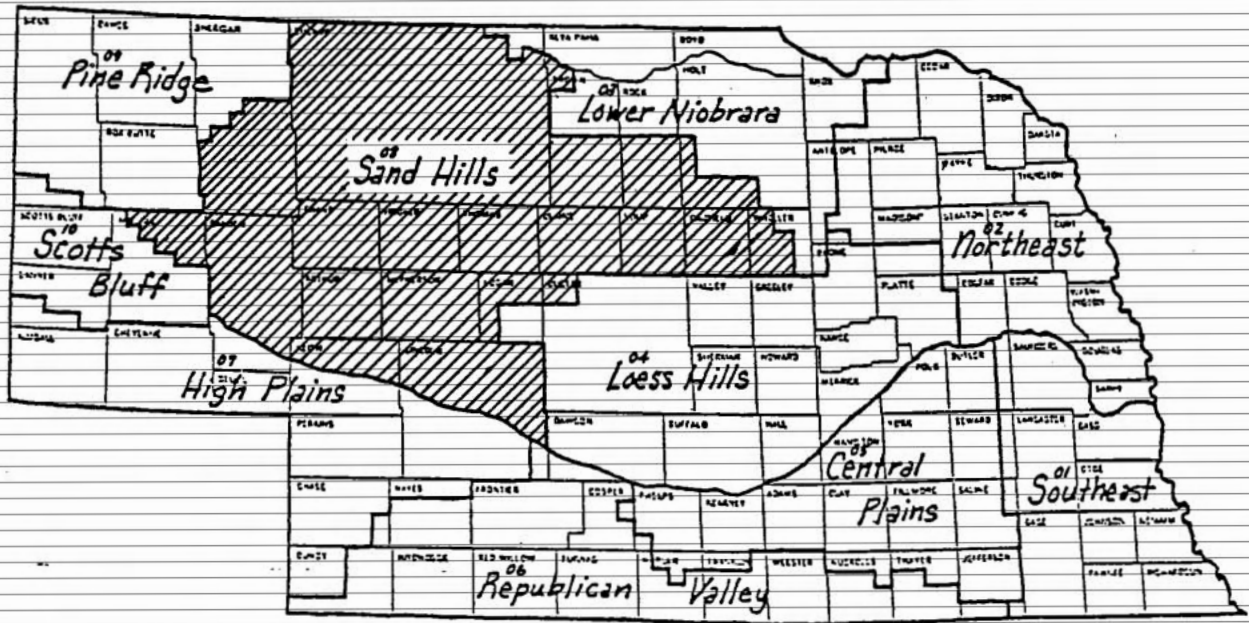


Fig. 6. The Sand Hills Cattle Ranching Area of Nebraska.

The Sand Hills Cattle Ranching area is located in the north-central and northwest portions of the state, (Figure 6). This area extends northward from the Platte River Valley of western Nebraska to the South Dakota border and varies in width from 100 to 200 miles. One of the fundamental characteristics of this area is the extremely large proportion of land devoted to the grazing of cattle. True to its name, the Sand Hills Cattle Ranching Area includes the

Sand Hills region of Nebraska which is the largest soil and topographic region in the state (Garey 1936, p.27). In fact, Nebraska's Sand Hills cover approximately one-fourth of the state and comprise the most extensive dune formation in the western hemisphere (Madson 1978, p.493). The Sand Hills country is characterized by low-lying dunes of sand covered by native grasses suitable for the grazing of cattle. There is little surface drainage due to the porous nature of the sandy soil. The vast dunes of the Sand hills lie above large aquifers which, in certain areas, reach a depth of one-thousand feet. Between the porous hills are numerous basins which sometimes widen into larger valleys. In many of these valleys the high water table has risen above the surface of the land and formed marshes, ponds, and lakes. The effect of the high water table is most evident in the presence of the 13,000 lakes scattered on the landscape of the north and west regions of the Sand Hills (Madson 1978, p. 499).

The soils of the Sand Hills region are exceptionally fine in texture and extremely susceptible to blowing. For this reason, it is the goal of the cattle producers to maintain the native grass covers which prevent "blow-outs" of the dune tops and provide the necessary supplements for grazing. Due to the presence of the sandy soils, the Sand Hills Cattle Ranching Area is not conducive to the production of cultivated crops. In 1936, only eight-percent of the area was deemed suitable for cultivation (Garey 1936, p.49). Only four percent of the entire region was classified as containing good soils and much of those areas were located along the river and streambeds (Garey 1936, p.49).

Given such environmental conditions it is easy to understand why the land

is utilized principally for the grazing of cattle. With more than seventy-five percent of the land in pasture and the majority of the remaining lands utilized for hay production, the cattle enterprise is the logical choice as the farming type in this region (Hedges and Elliott, p.27). Hay, in combination with limited amounts of other grains provides the winter feed necessary for breeding herds. Since the grasses of the Sand Hills are not primarily suitable for the production of grass-fat cattle, these breeding herds are maintained and the young cattle from the area are typically sent to the corn belt region prior to final shipment to market (Hedges and Elliott, p.59).

The Sand Hills Cattle Ranching Area, therefore, is essentially a cattle-raising area. The economic base is almost entirely from the sale of cattle with a small proportion coming from crop and dairy products. To illustrate the exclusivity of the Sand Hills as a cattle-raising region, data assembled by Hedges and Elliott showing the utilization of land area in the region from 1899 to 1928 has been illustrated below in Table 2.

Table 2: Utilization of Land in the Sand Hills Cattle Ranching Area, 1899-1928.

Land Utilization	1899	1909	1919	1924	1928
Cultivated Area	.5%	2.0%	3.9%	4.1%	4.2%
Wild Hay	3.9%	8.3%	10.5%	10.5%	11.0%
Pastures	11.3%	42.2%	63.2%	66.4%	80.3%
Land not in farms	84.3%	47.5%	22.4%	19.0%	4.5%

In reviewing this table, we see that the predominant trend among ranches in the Sand Hills was the increase of pasture land for the grazing of cattle. In fact, with the exception of the High Plains Small Grain and Grazing Area, by 1928 all other areas in the state had at least a double-digit split between cultivated acres and pastured lands. The only region to display a dominance in a singular agricultural type (in this case cattle) was the Sand Hills Cattle Ranching Area. Therefore, comparatively speaking, no other single agricultural type is as important to its respective region as the cattle industry is to the Sand Hills Ranching Area.

Property Types of the Sand Hills Cattle Ranching Area

In the property type discussions previously generated for the NeSHPO regarding ethnic-related contexts, the buildings of discussion were organized according to the separation of Old World and New World traditions. Unfortunately, the study of buildings associated with the Sand Hills Cattle Ranching do not lend themselves to this conceptual separation. While it is acknowledged that the design and arrangement of farm buildings elsewhere in Nebraska may have been influenced considerably by cultural traditions, the buildings of the Sand Hills Cattle Ranching Area are generally void of a significant ethnic influence. This is in part due to the minimal influx of foreign-born immigrants as well as the overall lack of a population base capable of transferring ethnically-associated building characteristics. Even if the potential for variances in cultural design were a valid concept in the Sand Hills Ranching Area, all cattle production requires a basic group of

animal and human-related structures. The compulsory provision of food, shelter, and land was required regardless of ethnic influences. Based on this attitude, the following property type discussion will simply focus upon the basic structures associated with sand hills cattle ranching.

The sand hills ranching system requires a variety of buildings and skills necessary for the successful management of significant numbers of cattle. Ranches which have retained their pre-mechanization buildings will have a variety of structures important to the reconnaissance level survey. The buildings found on the Sand Hills cattle ranches are similar in some respects to those found on the Intensive Livestock Production farms of northeast Nebraska. The buildings, structures and objects of common reference are; cattle barns, cattle loafing sheds, implement sheds, cattle fencing systems, windmills, windbreaks and the occasional small-scale corn crib. In addition to these animal-related structures, a set of domestic oriented buildings are also found in each of these regions: the ranch or farm house, wash houses, privies, cellars, milk houses, smoke houses, gardens, and chicken houses.

However, it is more significant at this time to note the additional set of buildings found exclusive to the Nebraska Sand Hills Cattle Ranching Area. All of the buildings mentioned in this category were constructed to either satisfy the management needs of the cattle themselves or to shelter the activities of the ranch hands employed in handling the herds. The buildings associated with the labor force include; bunkhouses for sleeping quarters, saddle sheds for the storage of riding equipment, cookhouses to prepare large group meals, and commissaries for the serving of those meals.

The specific structures or objects created exclusively for the handling of cattle include; dipping stations for the cleaning and health maintenance of cattle, vaccination/branding stanchions for the immunization and identification of stock, breaking pens for the implementation of working stock, sorting pens for the management and separation of bulls, calves and heifers, holding corrals usually located in outlying pasture land, and loading chutes for the eventual shipping of sale-bound cattle.



In addition to the fact that there exists a unique set of structures exclusive to Sand Hills cattle ranching, it is also important to note that the visual characteristics of a Sand Hills ranch are also unique in comparison with other type-of-farming areas in Nebraska. The overpowering presence of the Sand Hills landscape immediately imparts a mentality of no-nonsense survival tempered by intriguing beauty. The most visually and emotionally accurate description of a Sand Hills ranch read by the author to date is found in John Madson's adventure

to the Abbott Ranch in west-central Cherry County (National Geographic, Oct., 1978).

From the main highway the road back to the ranch is nine tough miles of ruts and sand traps. The farther you go, the more you wonder where you made the wrong turn. Suddenly, around the shoulder of a high ridge, there is ranch headquarters. The main house, in a grove of cottonwoods and box elders, is 67 years old, high-ceilinged and spacious. Nearby stand the bunkhouse and cookhouse, and set into the side of the ridge is a combination butcher shop, creamery, and commissary that can feed the ranch crew for two months if blizzards close the road.

Across the ranch yard, a blacksmith forge and machine shop are equipped to serve either horse or tractor. Beyond the pens, corrals, loading chutes, and dipping tanks lies a broad, sheltered valley with herds of wintering cattle. There is a certain quality about a working ranch like this; it is a window into yesterday, with something unchanged since before the ranges were fenced.

And it is indeed true that the appearance of a Sand Hills ranch nestled among billowing hills imparts an ageless "old west" quality. A quality perhaps derived in part from its early beginnings as an outgrowth of the Texas cattle industry.

HISTORY OF SAND HILLS CATTLE RANCHING

The Texas Cattle Industry

Despite the fact that small herds of cattle were ranged on the road ranches of the Platte Valley before the Civil War, the large scale post-war range cattle industry had its origins in the state of Texas, (Olson, pp.185). This fact was brought forth in Edward Everett Dale's comments in The Range Cattle

Industry (Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1930):

Any history of the cattle industry in the west must begin with Texas since that state was the original home of ranching on a large scale in the United States, and from its vast herds were drawn most of the cattle for the first stocking of the central and northern plains (Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1930).

Unfortunately, while it was not difficult to raise cattle in Texas, it was difficult in finding markets of a local proximity in which to sell the Texas raised longhorns. Prior to the Civil War, this problem was solved by driving the cattle great distances to the southeastern ports of New Orleans and Galveston or the northern ports of Chicago and Cincinnati. However, the advent of the Civil War during the early 1860's disrupted the cattle industry by cutting off the established markets of the 1840's and 1850's, (Olson, pp.185). With these markets no longer available, the population of cattle in the state of Texas swelled and included not only those stock in managed herds but also large numbers of wild cattle as well. In the years immediately following the conclusion of the Civil War (1865-70), the Texas cattle industry resumed the tradition of the long cattle drive. This time however, the destination of the drives was generally not the previously-mentioned port cities to the southeast and north but rather to the shipping points along the westward moving rails of the Kansas Pacific and Union Pacific railroads (Olson, p.186). This change in destinations resulted in the development of ranches in the northern plains bringing the cattle nearer the shipping and market areas.

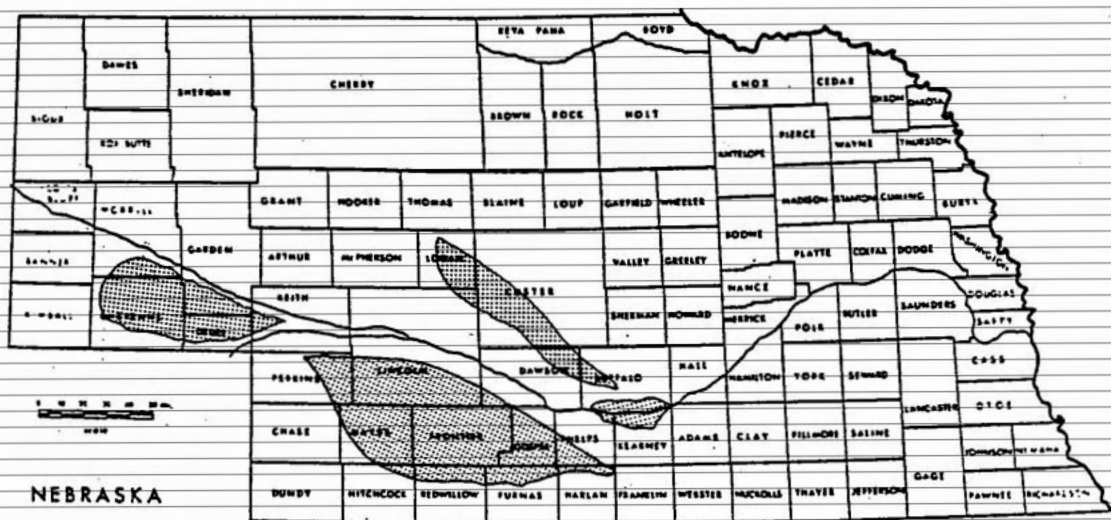
The Development of Railroad Cattle Shipping in Nebraska

Despite the post-war advent of new shipping locations on the plains north of Texas, a relatively low percentage of the cattle were driven as far north as Nebraska (15,000 of 260,000 in 1866). Of the cattle which were driven to Nebraska, the majority were purchased by the United States government to feed the Native American Indians located on Nebraska reservations. The largest percentage of cattle driven north from Texas were destined for Abilene, Kansas to be shipped eastward on the Kansas Pacific rail lines. However, in the winter of 1869, officials from the Union Pacific Railroad began to interest themselves in the prospect of shipping cattle from points along their rail lines in Nebraska (Olson, p.186). By the summer of 1870 the Union Pacific had finalized its plans and had joined in competition with the Kansas Pacific Railroad in the cattle shipping industry. The early shipping points of the Union Pacific in Nebraska were Schuyler (1870), Kearney (1871-73), and finally Ogallala (1873-c.1885). While the existence of Schuyler and Kearney as cattle shipping points was short-lived, Ogallala became a primary shipping point and was subsequently labeled the "Cowboy Capital" of Nebraska. In 1875, over 60,000 Texas cattle were driven into Ogallala and from 1876 to the middle 1880's, the number of Texas cattle brought into Ogallala on an annual basis was over 100,000 (Olson, p.187).

The days of the northbound cattle drives from Texas came to an end in the middle 1880's as settlement in northwest Kansas and southwest Nebraska created competition for land and invoked herd laws to stem the flow of Texas cattle

into recently settled Nebraska lands. By this time however, the cattle industry brought up the trails from Texas had firmly established itself in the environs of western Nebraska and eastern Wyoming.

The Nebraska Range 1865-1876



The beef cattle industry originally established in Nebraska was located in four primary areas: the lower panhandle region between the North and South Platte rivers; the region between the Platte and Republican rivers; the Platte Valley adjacent to Kearney; and the valley of the South Loup River (Olson, p.188). These four regions shared several factors necessary for the establishment of cattle operations. Each of the areas were near the terminals of the Texas trails on the Union Pacific, they were protected by U.S. military forts, they had access to the local markets of the Indian reservations, and they contained

good pasture land, (Olson, pp.188). After the rangelands in these initial areas were occupied, the cattle industry spread into the settled portions of the state. As the drought and grasshopper years of the middle 1870's forced many settlers off the land in the upper Elkhorn (Holt County) and Republican River valleys (Furnas, Red Willow, and Hitchcock counties) the cattle moved into these areas and expanded the boundaries of their industry (Olson, p.188).

However, the northern Sand Hills region of Nebraska remained extremely uninviting to the early cattlemen of Nebraska. With the exception of the cattle sent into the Sand Hills ranges from ranches on the south and east fringes of the region (John Bratt & Co. Ranch 1870-72; Keystone Cattle Co. and the B-Bar Bosler Bros. 1875; Cody-North Ranch 1877), the interior of the Sand Hills area was a source of mystery and fear to the cattlemen of Nebraska until the late 1870's (Aeschbacher, 1946, p.209). This is attributed to both the misconception of the Sand Hills as inadequate grazing land and to the fear of the Sioux Indian nation who controlled the Sand Hills until their 1876 secession to the U.S. Government. The Sioux nation claim to the Sand Hills area stemmed primarily from a treaty signed in 1868 which confirmed the Sioux claim to all land north of the North Platte River (Aeschbacher, 1946, p.205). As the whites followed the Oregon Trail and Union Pacific railroad through Nebraska, they avoided the Sand Hills territory of the Sioux nation. Consequently, there is no record of any permanent white settlement in the Sand Hills prior to 1875 (Aeschbacher, 1946, p.206). In that year, the U.S. Government paid the Sioux \$25,000 for an 11,000 square mile strip of the Sand Hills which extended northward from the fork of the Platte River to within

twenty miles of the Niobrara River in what is now Cherry County. Then in 1876, after a year of conflict and bloodshed with the U.S. Government, the Sioux ceded the remainder of the territory north to the boundary of the state (Aeschbacher, 1946, p.206).

Despite the 1875-76 acquisition of the Sand Hills territory by the U.S. Government, the early cattlemen of Nebraska were still hesitant to penetrate the unknown interior of the rugged Sand Hills. This remained true until the spring of 1879 when two separate experiences forced the cattlemen to reconsider.

The first of these incidents occurred when Frank North of the Cody-North Ranch decided to take a herd of cattle straight north through the hills from the roundup on his southern range to his home range on the Dismal River. In years prior to this, North had avoided the Sand Hills by circling around the southeastern edge of the territory. In doing so, however, he had more than doubled the seventy mile direct route which he embarked upon in 1879. After going about thirty-five miles through supposedly dry country, North came upon a lake around which were approximately seven-hundred head of cattle in much better condition than those he had gathered on his roundup (Aeschbacher, 1946 p. 211). At about the same time, the Newman Brothers of the N-Bar Ranch located in the northwest fringe of the Sand Hills experienced a similar discovery. The Newmans considered the Sand Hills a graveyard for cattle and therefore established "line-rider" ranches along the edge of the hills to prevent the cattle from drifting into undesirable land. However, a blizzard in March of 1879 drove approximately six-thousand head of cattle past the line-riders

and into the hills. In April of the same year, the Newman's decided to make an attempt to save the cattle by sending a roundup into the hills. After working five weeks, the crew brought back not six-thousand, but eight-thousand cattle that wore the Newman brand, and an additional one-thousand head of unbranded cattle that were apparently descendents of animals that had drifted into the Sand Hills in previous years, (Aeschbacher, 1946, p.211).

If these two incidents were not enough to convince the cattlemen to reconsider, the winter of 1880-81 provided the final incentive. During the severe blizzards of that season, thousands of cattle ranged on the Platte Valley perished in the storms. Meanwhile, the Cody-North Ranch isolated in the southern Sand Hills lost relatively few cattle (Aeschbacher, 1946, p. 212). After this, the ranchers realized the Sand Hills region was not only suitable as cattle country, but in many respects was superior to the previously utilized rangelands.

Consequently, by the middle 1880's, the Sand Hills had developed into an important region for the beef cattle industry. This development was forged however, not by the hands of the big cattle companies previously mentioned, but by the recent influx of small scale operations. The big ranch companies never seriously invaded the area, and none actually moved their headquarters into the prosperous hills. Instead, they remained near the shipping points of the Union Pacific railroad and only ventured into the Sand Hills during their semi-annual roundups (Aeschbacher, 1946, p. 213). Because these large companies did not pursue the establishment of their headquarters within the Sand Hills, the opportunity for the small operators to move in and establish their own

ranches was presented. Initially these new ranches consisted of modest land holdings and small cattle herds. By the year 1900, however, these small single-family ranches had grown into large organizations which controlled thousands of acres of Sand Hill grazing land (Olson, p. 191). This era of growth was aided by the extension of the Burlington Railroad through the interior of the Sand Hills in the years 1887-88 (Olson, p. 190).

The availability of rail shipping provided the "new" ranchers with access to markets in the east and enabled their once small holdings to expand rapidly. Some of the large companies of the southern plains states such as the Spade and 101 Ranches as well as the British-owned UBI ranch had established holdings in the Sand Hills.

Initially, the ranchers of the early 1880's simply ran their cattle on public domain. They selected the best piece of land they could find and simply located as squatters without paying either taxes or rent (Aeschbacher, 1946, p. 219). The range was considered "open" only in theory. The cattlemen, through mutual agreements and friendly local governments, were able to control the influx of homestead settlers through friendly persuasion and strong-armed harassment. Then in 1885, the cause of the homesteaders was strengthened by federal legislation which prohibited any enclosure of the public domain (Olson, p. 192). This of course, was worrisome news for the ranchers of the Sand Hills who had fenced large tracts of public land in an effort to deter the incoming homesteaders. Coincident to this legislation was the growing sentiment in the eastern states that the "open" lands should not be an administrative expense to the government but rather privately owned land subject to taxation

(Aeschbacher, 1946, p .219). In order to respond to this sentiment, the ranchers of the Sand Hills proposed plans whereby the present user of the property would have the first opportunity to buy or lease the land they were currently using for range and thereby protect the large investments made in fencing the public land (Aeschbacher, p .219). However, two serious blows were dealt to the ranchers in the early twentieth-century which affected the cattle industry until the Depression years of the 1920's.

The first of these setbacks came with the administration of President Theodore Roosevelt in 1901. Under the direction of Roosevelt, the U.S. Government embarked on an effort to enforce the heretofore ignored illegal fence law of 1885. For example, in one case, Roosevelt ordered actions against two of the ruling officers of the Nebraska Land and Feeding Company: Bartlett Richards and William Comstock. The Nebraska Land and Feeding Company operated the Spade, Bar C, and Overton Ranches which comprised over 212,000 acres of illegally fenced government land (Olson, p. 193). The men were eventually convicted and incarcerated in the Adams County Jail of Hastings, Nebraska.

The second setback suffered by the ranchers in their effort to sustain their illegally fenced lands occurred in 1904 and proved to be a substantially more powerful blow. Their hopes for a purchase or lease law were permanently shattered by the 1904 passage of the Kinkaid Act. This act increased the size of the homestead in the Sand Hills from the previously inadequate one-quarter section (160 acres) to an entire 640-acre section. The settlers, known as "Kinkaiders" could receive patents for their lands after residence of five

years and proof that they had placed improvements of \$1.25 per acre upon the land claimed. When the Sand Hills were opened to the Kinkaiders, the population of the region boomed. The eastern portion of the Sand Hills were the first area to witness the influx of Kinkaiders (Aeschbacher, 1946, p. 220). While the majority of the claims in the eastern area of the Sand Hills occurred in the years immediately following 1904, the western portion of the Sand Hills was not settled by Kinkaiders for another ten years (Aeschbacher, 1946, p.220). The greater portion of this western area consisted of a tract of the North Platte Forest Reserve which was not available for claiming until 1913. Following the passage of the Kinkaid Act in 1904, the Sand Hills went through a 10 to 20 year period of ill-fated farming efforts. The sandy soils of the region were not suitable for cultivation and any attempts to sustain annual crops resulted in rapid erosion and eventual "blow-outs" of proposed farmland. The Depression of the 1920's forced many of those who had taken Homestead claims under the Kinkaid Act to sell their land to the cattlemen. For those who did hold on, the combined drought and depression of the 1930's signalled an end to their dreams as well. By this time, the pattern of the present-day cattle ranching industry was fairly well established. Any lingering misconceptions that farming would displace cattle-raising in the Sand Hills region had been firmly dismissed. The vast expanses of the Sand Hills had, in an indirect fashion, returned into the hands of the cattle-raising industry and the balance of the fragile grass covered dunes was once again restored.

THE IMPACT OF THE KINKAID AND HOMESTEAD ACTS IN THE NORTHERN NEBRASKA SAND HILLS



The Homestead Act, and more importantly the Kinkaid Act, had a significant impact on the settlement of the Sand Hills region. Under the patronage of these acts, the population of the Sand Hills region increased tremendously. The influx of settlers spawned an era of economic prosperity which witnessed the construction of a significant number of rural buildings. In order to satisfy the requirements of their claim, the homesteaders and more significantly the Kinkaiders, were required to reside on their claims therefore necessitating the construction of buildings for human and animal occupancy. It is these buildings which are of particular interest to the survey results based on their relation to this important period of settlement. Based on the contributions these acts made to the historic built environment of the northern

Sand Hills region it was considered necessary to discuss their provisions and subsequent impact.

During the first two decades of the settlement of Nebraska (1855-1875), the Sand Hills region was left largely unsettled and remained part of Nebraska's unorganized territory. The entire region was known as Sioux country and official business was conducted through Cheyenne County. By the late 1870's and early 1880's, the Sand Hills area was beginning to experience its first influx of settlers. The period of initial settlement that followed (1880 to 1890), was one of generally good conditions and settlement increased at a steady rate. It was during this period that the first impact of the Homestead Act of 1862 was felt in the northern Nebraska Sand Hills region. While the eastern counties of the northern Sand Hills study area (Keya Paha, Brown, Rock, Blaine, Loup) had experienced homestead claims in the 1870's, the first claims filed in the western counties (Cherry, Grant, Hooker, Thomas) occurred between the years of 1880 and 1886.

The Homestead Act of 1862 provided for up to one-quarter section of "free" land (160 acres) to heads of families who had paid the \$10.00 filing fee and resided or cultivated the land for five consecutive years. Supplemental to the Homestead Act was the Timber Culture Act approved by Congress in 1873. It provided that a homesteader could acquire any additional one-quarter section by planting 40 acres with trees and caring for them for ten years.

Prior to the influx of homesteaders into the Sand Hills, a portion of the region was occupied by large cattle companies using the public domain of the open range for the grazing of cattle. When the homesteaders began to stake their claims, the open range land used by the cattle companies was subdivided

into smaller properties of 160 to 320 acre holdings (Olson, p. 192). The majority of homesteaders, in compliance of the Act, began to cultivate the land of the northern Sand Hills. However, this proved to be an ill-fated decision due to the high susceptibility of the sand-based soil to erosion. Once the grass covered mantle was tilled under for cultivation large "blow-outs" resulted and the land which had been cultivated was rendered useless. By the end of the 1880's, the perception of the Sand Hills as an inadequate region for cultivation had been realized (Tubbs, p. 117).

In the 1890's, faced with drouth, grasshopper plagues and economic depression, many settlers returned east or moved further west and the area experienced its first loss in population. Because of the events this decade, the ultimate impact of the Homestead Act in the northern Sand Hills was relatively short-lived and uneventful. This however, is in marked contrast to the impact of the Act in Nebraska as a whole.

Under the impetus of the Homestead Act and other land promotions, settlers poured into the state literally by the thousands. The population of Nebraska increased from 452,402 in 1880 to 1,058,910 in 1890, a total increase of 134% (Olson, p. 195). Also during the decade of the prosperous 1880's, twenty-six counties were organized throughout the state leaving only four counties as yet unorganized. While a great deal of credit must be given to settlement that resulted from the arrival of the railroads, it was through the Homestead Act and related federal legislation that much of Nebraska's rural lands were settled (Olson, p. 157).

Despite the statewide success of the Homestead Act, the only successful use made of the law in the Sand Hills was by cattlemen who used it to secure

stream fronts and water holes. In fact, a great deal of the Sand Hills area had never been homesteaded and was used only for open grazing (Tubbs, p. 118). The condition of the homesteaders in the Sand Hills region during the 1870's convinced much of the population that the settlement of the area under the existing Homestead or Timber Claim Acts was not satisfactory. The land which the settlers could obtain was not sufficient for sustaining a livelihood in the Sand Hills region. Even in the areas of the Sand Hills where cultivation of crops was possible, 160 to 320 acres was simply not an adequate amount for a single-family property. The original intent of the Homestead Act was to distribute the land in humid areas east of the 100th meridian but it made no provisions for increasing the size of the claim for those areas with insufficient rainfall of inadequate soils (Reynolds, p. 20). The desperate plight of the homesteader in the Sand Hills region gradually gained the support of regional and national politicians. In fact, prior to the drouth-stricken 1890's, the Public Lands Commission of 1879 recommended a homestead on grazing lands of four square miles. Cattlemen, however, were naturally satisfied with existing conditions and the four section recommendation was never accepted.

However, the idea of an enlarged homestead as a means of settling the Sand Hills was revived by T.A. Fort of North Platte following the drouth of 1890 (Tubbs, p. 118). Fort proposed a homestead of two square miles (2,560 acres) with a requirement of five years residence and annual improvements on the land (Tubbs, p. 118). By 1900, Fort had interested the recently elected Congressman William Neville in his new proposal. In 1901, Neville introduced a bill to provide a two-square mile homestead but the proposal never advanced pass the committee stage (Tubbs, p. 118).

One year later, in 1902, President Theodore Roosevelt called attention to the inadequacy of the quarter-section homestead in the arid western lands. Although Roosevelt made no specific proposals, the road was paved for congressional action. The leadership for this action was assumed by Moses P. Kinkaid of O'Neill, Nebraska who had defeated Neville in the 1902 race for the sixth district congressional seat. In April 1904, Kinkaid introduced a bill to the House of Representatives which would eventually change the settlement history of much of Western Nebraska. The intent of the bill was to "amend the homestead laws as to certain unappropriated and unreserved lands in Nebraska," (Reynold, p. 21).

The bill, as presented to the committee on Public Lands, requested a homestead of 1,280 acres in thirty-seven Nebraska counties to be acquired by a residence of five years and improvements of \$1.25 per acre for each acre claimed. The committee amended the bill to 640 acres and recommended it to the house on April 13, 1904, stating that the increased size of the homestead would compensate the homesteader on quantity of land for what it lacked in quality and productiveness (Reynolds p. 22). The report by the committee emphasized that, from 1875 to 1904, the land to which the bill applied had been rejected by homesteaders who had settled only on the quarter sections of land good enough to support cultivation. This pattern had left open for settlement the semi-arid grazing lands incapable of supporting a profitable farm on only 160 acre tracts of land (Reynolds page 22). The report also stated that, in numerous cases, the homesteaders who did file claims on the unsuitable areas had only done so with the intent of selling the land to the cattlemen once their claim was fulfilled. A committee was appointed to work out the

differences between the two bills and, after approval of both houses, the Kinkaid Act was signed by President Roosevelt on April 28, 1904.

The final form of the bill provided that the homestead unit should not exceed 640 acres and that any lands which were irrigable should not be open to entry (Reynolds p. 23). Homesteaders in the territory who had occupied lands already under entry were allowed to claim adjoining lands up to the 640 acre total and have their existing house serve as the residence for the additional land (Reynolds p. 23). The additional land was then given final proof five years after the filing date.

SOD HOUSES OF THE NORTHERN NEBRASKA SAND HILLS STUDY REGION



The northern Nebraska Sand Hills Historic Buildings Survey was, in many respects, a highly successful project.

The reconnaissance level survey of the nine county region recorded a staggering total of 1,524 properties which included 4,287 buildings, structures, sites and objects.

As with most historic buildings surveys, the properties recorded in the northern Sand Hills survey displayed various levels of significance.

While the majority of the buildings recorded by the survey were successful in meeting the historic integrity criteria required for reconnaissance level documentation (see Appendix 2: Research Design), they generally did not carry a substantial amount of significance. However, in contrast to this are those buildings which not only retain their historic integrity, but possess qualities which enhance their significance as historic resources.

One such group of resources in the northern Sand Hills region that may possess a greater level of significance are those buildings associated with sod "brick" construction. Twenty-seven properties containing sod buildings

were recorded by the northern Nebraska Sand Hills Historic Buildings Survey. This includes nine in Blaine County, eight in Thomas County, seven in Cherry County, two in Hooker County, and one in Loup County, (see Sod House Inventory, p. 83). These buildings were considered particularly significant as representatives of Homestead/Kinkaid Act settlement and Sand Hills Range Livestock Production agriculture. The majority (21) of the sod houses have been preliminarily associated with Homestead and Kinkaid Act settlement. These houses consist of massive sod "brick" walls measuring up to twenty-four inches in thickness. The sod used for the construction of the houses was cut with a plow in the bottomland areas where the soil was of higher quality. The sod plow would flip over one strip of sod approximately eighteen to twenty-four inches wide which would then be cut into desired "brick" size lengths. These bricks were then stacked in alternating fashion with the grass-side down. The walls were typically covered with an exterior stucco wash. In some cases however, the exposed sod wall received no protective covering, (TM00-042, BL00-027). These sod houses have a distinctly low and bulky appearance and are often identifiable by their lack of plumb walls and corners. The exterior wall height of the soddies was considerably shorter than that of frame structures and little, if any, fenestration was included on the north walls of the buildings. The houses typically contained rectangular two-room plans with a narrow side dimension of twenty feet or less, (Supratype: R,1.5,1.0,H,Lo). The general era of construction for the Homestead/Kinkaid Act sod houses ranged from approximately 1900 to as late as 1917. However, exceptions to this were found in a sub-group of four sod houses constructed

between the years of 1930 and 1945. These "second generation" sod houses were constructed as an inexpensive form of shelter during the difficult economic conditions wrought by the Depression.

The physical condition of the sod houses recorded by the survey was quite varied. Surprisingly few (8) of the houses were in extremely deteriorated condition with less than four walls standing. The remaining nineteen houses ranged in condition from unoccupied and deteriorated to well-maintained residences for local ranch labor.

As part of an amendment to the reconnaissance survey of the region, Save America's Heritage was instructed to perform intensive level survey of four of the sod houses in south-central Thomas County. The intensive survey of these buildings included on-site field documentation, deed research, and locally written county history research. The data generated by the intensive survey of the sod houses serves as the basis for planning decisions regarding the future study of sod houses in the northern Nebraska Sand Hills region.

SOD HOUSE INVENTORY FOR THE NORTHERN NEBRASKA HISTORIC BUILDINGS SURVEY

Blaine County	DATE	RESOURCE/Common Name	HISTORIC CONTEXT
BL00-005	c.1930	Lister clay house	16.01
BL00-018	c.1906	William Gladson Sod House	16.01
BL00-023	c.1905	Sod House	16.01
BL00-027	c.1905	Sod House	16.01
BL00-029	1940	Dean Hersh Sod House	16.01
BL00-033	c.1940	Fred Hartley Sod House	16.01
BL00-034	c.1901	William Harris Sod House	16.01
BL00-036	c.1903	Buck Minister/Blakeley Sod House	16.01
BL00-041	c.1907	Lawrence Thompson Sod House	16.01

Thomas County

TM00-008	1912	Carles Johnson Sod House	16.01
TM00-009	1911	Clark Mowery Sod House	16.01
TM00-010	1908	Joseph Albright Sod House	16.01
TM00-011	1911	Frederick Jameson Sod House	16.01
TM00-024	1917	Archie Warner Sod House	16.01
TM00-041	1938	Figard Sod House	16.01
TM00-042	1916	W.D. Paul Sod House	16.01
TM04-028	c.1906	Inman Sod House	16.01

Cherry County

CE00-128	c.1908	Dr. Rollin Roth Sod House	16.01
CE00-188	c.1900	George Adam Sod House	16.01
CE00-197	c.1900	Spade Ranch Cow Camp Sod House	108.08
CE00-201	c.1885	Geisler Sod House	16.01
CE00-207	c.1885	N-Bar Ranch Sod House	108.08
CE00-216	c.1905	Sod House	16.01
CE00-221	1908	Carpenter Sod House	16.01

Hooker County

H000-004	c.1930	Sod Houses	16.01
H000-021	c.1915	Sod House	16.01

Loup County

LP00-003	c.1885	Sod House	16.01
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Evolution of the Family Ranch

"After the new house was built, my grandfather's house was torn down...it used to sit where that concrete shop is now," (Tim Ganser interview, November 1988). This casual description given by one of the ranchers concerning his original family homestead, exemplifies the evolution of the family ranch. From original homesteaders to present day ranchers, the family ranch has not been ignorant to change. Over the years original homesteads have either expanded as a result of prosperous growth or dwindled to the point of raw survival as a result of changing times. It is the first of these scenarios in which we wish to explore further. As acknowledged, the physical components of the family ranch which combine to comprise one unit have evolved from a series of technological advances.

Population growth to the sandhills region saw a major increase during the teens as a result of the Kinkaid Act. Under this act settlers could claim up to 640 acres of land where previously only a maximum of 160 acres was obtainable. Thousands of acres owned by the government were granted over to eager settlers. Mari Sandoz described these people in Sandhill Sundays, (1930):

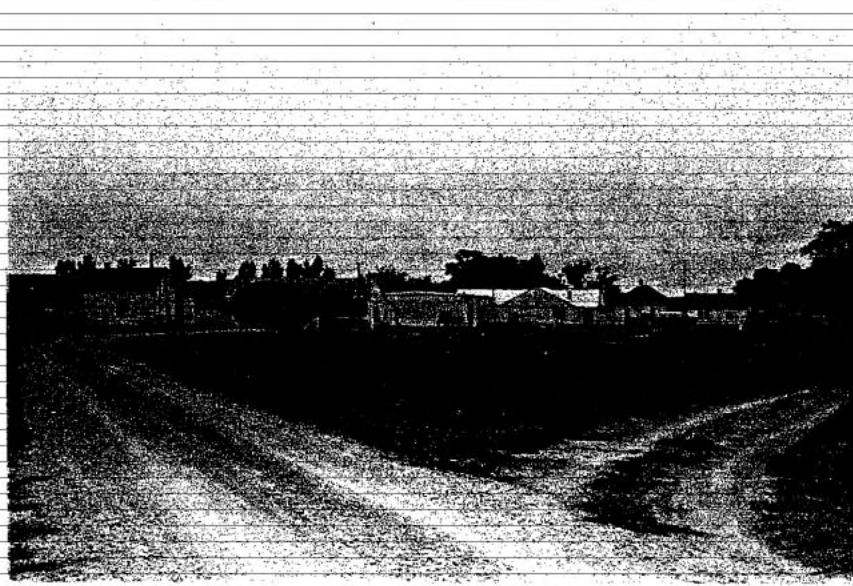
"...perhaps a potential settler should realize from the start that homesteading was not for the timid, and as soon as a man could say "I'm looking for me a piece of government land-" he was among friends. He and any family he had were welcome to eat at our table and sleep in our beds even if we children were moved to the floor. This was naturally all agreed beyond the twenty-five dollar locating and surveying fee Old Jules charged whenever the settler managed to get the money. Often the family stayed with us until their house was up."

After the acreage was located and property markers were established, the homesteader began the task of breaking the virgin ground. Farming was the original intention but the sandy composition of the land would soon prove otherwise. Simultaneous to the turning of the land came the construction of a dwelling. Making do with material at hand, many of the early shelters were built out of sod or in the earth itself. Lumber was also available via the railroad. Other buildings essential to the ranch practice such as an outhouse, barn, and other outbuildings, soon followed. These structures were most always constructed of lumber.

As the family ranch continued operation, there began a transfer of responsibility from one generation to the next. Children became pseudo-apprentices to the practices of ranch operation for in time, they would assume responsibility. This transfer of control creates the second generation family ranch.

The Kinkaid Act becomes a historic document representing a stage in early settlement. By this time, methods for ranching have been established. There also exists a house, and the other necessary outbuildings. Changes made to the ranch will build upon what already exists. Additions to the house take place as the family continues to increase. Technological advances in farm machinery require buildings to house them. It is in this period that we see the physical fabric of the ranch expand with refinement in experimental operation.

As the third generation assumes responsibility for the family ranch, changes in building functions begin to shift. Because of modern conveniences such as indoor plumbing and electricity, the original house has become



unfavorable as the main dwelling. A new main house is built with the former house left for the grandparents to live. Eventually, the original house either falls in disrepair, is used for scrap materials, or becomes an outbuilding to house livestock or grain. Sheathing material such as stucco and tin also find practical use in the protection of deteriorated outbuildings in need of repair. One by one the original frame homestead buildings begin to fall. The once important large gambrel roofed barn finds minor use as a part-time garage. The two tall silos flanking it threaten to collapse. But behind the barn is a complex of new pre-fabricated with gleaming metal roofs (J.B. Jackson, 1984).

Prefabricated buildings designed and manufactured by large companies from far away places find their way into the ranch landscape. The symbiotic relationship once held by the buildings and the settlers who created them becomes blurred. Even the family house each one unique to its environment

slowly disappears in favor of the more economical, more temporary, more impersonal trailer house.

In the course of roughly 100 years, the evolution of the family ranch in Nebraska's sandhills region has experienced major change. Today's vision of the ranch landscape is expressed in pictures of large frame houses and gambrel roofed barns. Will tomorrow's ranch landscape consist of trailer homes and Behlen buildings?

Catalogue Houses

The homesteader got most of his items through mail order catalogues, including, sometimes, his wife, if one could call the matrimonial papers, the heart-and-hand publications, catalogue. They did describe the offerings rather fully but with, perhaps, a little less honesty than Montgomery Ward or Sears Roebuck.

Sandhill Sundays (1930) by Mari Sandoz

Before the days of modern transportation, the physical landscape of many regions influenced and dictated the type of architecture executed. The Sand Hills region of Nebraska offered very little in terms of native building materials for homesteaders. They made do with materials at hand which consisted of a few trees for lumber and plenty of sod for "bricks". The sod house came to represent a common house type known to the plains. Landscape historian J.B. Jackson, described the limitations of materials in the built environment in his book Discovering The Vernacular Landscape, "...In the West... new houses are either of the prefabricated, mail-order variety or made of concrete block for lack of inexpensive lumber," (1984).

Soon after early settlement, the newly established railway system began shipping merchandise to once isolated places. The availability of lumber increased and it soon became the dominant building material. Construction on the plains was at its peak.

The late 19th and early 20th centuries were ripe for entrepreneurs who sold architectural plans as well as the houses themselves. The Hodgeson Company, Alladin Homes, Montgomery Ward, and Sears and Roebuck all had their start in the prefabricated housing business between 1895 and 1910. Sears however, was the largest: its sales reached 30,000 houses by 1925 and nearly

50,000 by 1930, more than any other mail order Company (Stevenson and Jandl 1986).



House No. 2024 was available from Sears and Roebuck Co. (1916-1917), from Houses by Mail. Stevenson and Jandl, 1986.

Although catalogue houses were available anywhere the railroad went, popularity of these houses was concentrated in the midwest. Nebraska, and more specifically the sand hills region were not excluded from this 20th century phenomena. Stevenson and Jandl (1986) have identified 20 Sears mail-order houses constructed in Nebraska according to the records from the Sears archives. Documentation of houses includes style, location, and date of construction. Unfortunately, the Sears Company did not keep extensive records on every house sold. Further, numerous house plans were sold without the pre-cut lumber package. In these instances, it is even harder to estimate how many of these houses were actually built and even more difficult to locate. To further complicate matters, it is very difficult to identify a catalogue house just by viewing the exterior. Sears offered a wide selection of the most

sought-after styles. They also welcomed alterations to existing plans as well as custom designed houses.

Save America's Heritage recognizes the importance of catalogue houses to the history of Nebraska. Through the thirty years of catalogue house production, catalogue house companies, especially Sears, has set impressive records of houses sold. Unpretentiously, these houses have been integrated into the architectural landscape and are symbols of innovation in the modern housing industry. The sheer number which were estimated to have been built testifies to the popularity of catalogue homes and reflects twentieth-century attitudes.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE WORK

Throughout the duration of the Blaine County survey, random observations were recorded in an effort to later construct recommendations for future work. The general impressions recorded by the survey team were then combined with a post-survey analysis of documented historic properties. The resulting recommendations were conceptualized by Save America's Heritage to fit the "tools" of preservation and documentation available to the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office. These tools consist of Multiple Property, Historic District, and individual nominations to the National Register of Historic Places as well as intensive survey relating to Historic Context Reports.

The following suggestions are separated into two categories and are presented as follows: 1) NeSHPO National Register Follow-Up, and 2) Potential Historic Context Studies.

National Register Recommendations

The first of the two categories, the NeSHPO National Register Follow-Up, is a basic summary of the potential National Register of Historic Places listing activities associated with the Blaine County survey.

Save America's Heritage strongly suggests the drafting of nominations for all properties judged by NeSHPO staff as potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The drafting of these nominations may occur in two basic forms. First, as Multiple Property nominations for all properties which relate to Historic Contexts developed by the NeSHPO, or as individual

nominations of the 20 properties listed in the Preliminary Inventory of Blaine County historic properties. The properties which appear in the Preliminary Inventory are those which appear potentially eligible for the National Register and should be acted upon immediately following the submittal of this report.

Potential Historic Context Studies/Multiple Property Nominations

The following priority for future work recommended by Save America's Heritage is presented at this point as the topics which appears to have the greatest potential for development into Historic Context Reports. The bases for these suggestions were derived from pre-survey research, agricultural analyses, and reconnaissance survey observations.

1. Sand Hills Range Livestock Production (08.08)

It is Save America's Heritage recommendation that the Sand Hills Range Livestock Production (08.08) Historic Context Report be developed by the NeSHPO and followed by an investigative study of historic properties within Blaine County which relate to this context. For a discussion of this topic, please refer to the article on Sand Hills Range Livestock Production (SHRLP) found on page 54. In addition, a Preliminary Inventory of those properties potentially significant for their association with SHRLP agriculture is found on page 31. However, the seven properties included in this inventory are not solely associated with the context of SHRLP agriculture. These properties may be found, upon further research, to carry more significance in relation to the

Historic Context of Kinkaid Act Settlement (16.01). The primary reason for the inability to pinpoint these properties is the heretofore unanswered question regarding the original practices of the first property owners. Were the owners of the Blaine County soddies engaging in a significant scale of cattle production or were they more dependent upon cultivated crops for their livelihoods? In addition, were these sod house dwellers indeed "Kinkaiders" or had they obtained their land under other pretenses?

2. Sod Houses of Blaine County

In light of the aforementioned research questions, Save America's Heritage also recommends the intensive study of all extant sod houses recorded by the Blaine County Historic Buildings Survey. These sod houses exist in various stages of deterioration and their eminent demise is in the near future. The nine sod houses recorded by the survey are examined in greater detail in the discussion of Sod Houses of the northern Nebraska Sand Hills found on page 80. These houses may also carry significance for their possible association with Sand Hills Range Livestock Production and/or Kinkaid Act Settlement. Therefore, these properties should be intensively surveyed as a for development of a Historic Context Report and potential National Register nomination.

3. Kinkaid Act Settlement in Blaine County

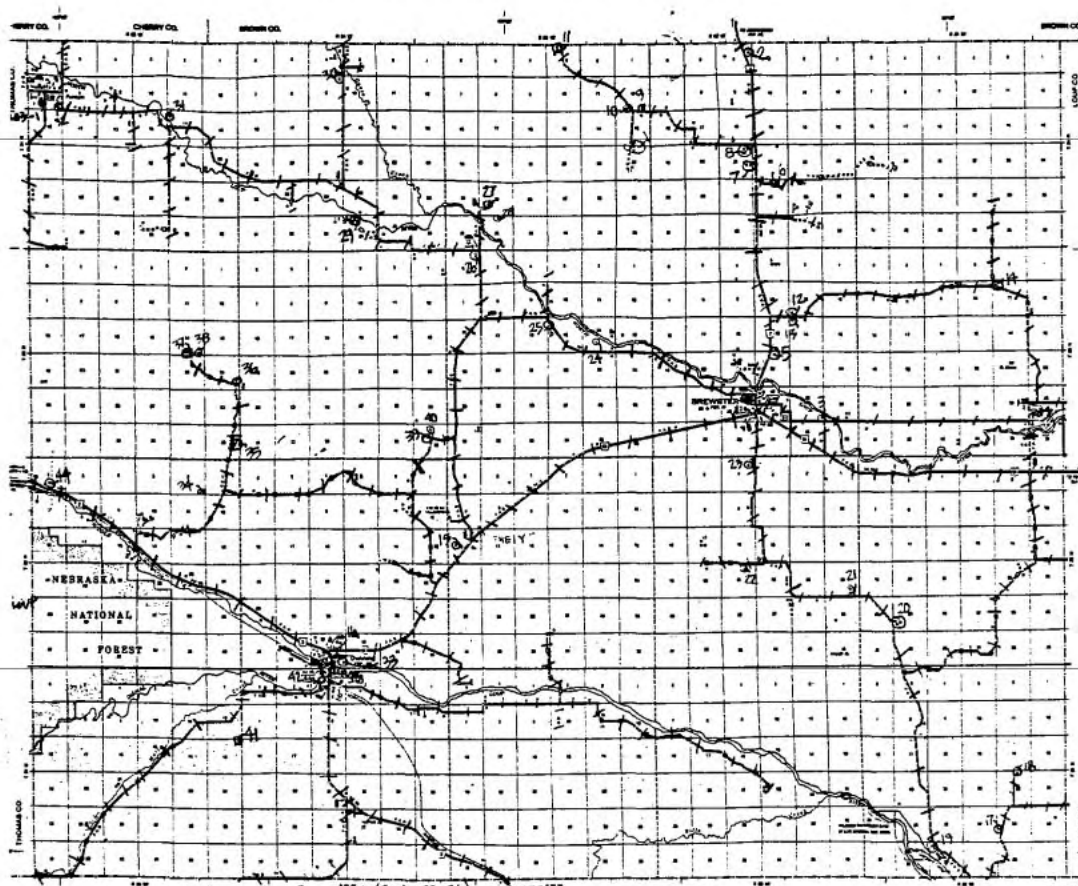
The third and final recommendation for future research in Thomas County is the examination of the properties related to Kinkaid Act Settlement. This

subject has been touched upon in the recommendations discussed above and is one of the possible areas of significance for the rural sod house properties recorded by the survey. For a discussion of the impact of the Kinkaid Act in the northern Nebraska Sand Hills , please refer to the discussion found on page 74.

APPENDICES

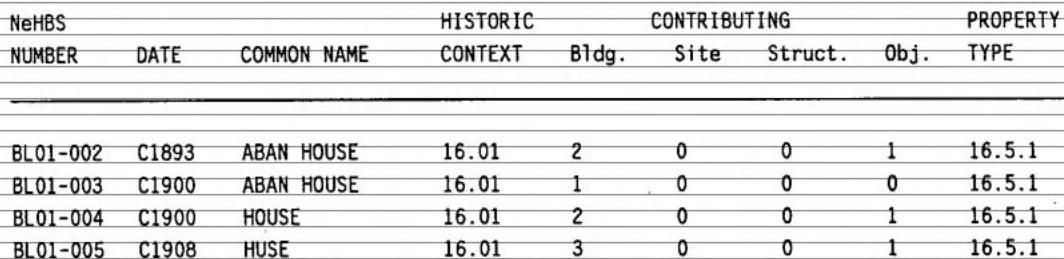
Appendix 1: Blaine County Historic Buildings Survey Inventory

BL00: BLAINE COUNTY RURAL INVENTORY



NeHBS NUMBER	DATE	RESOURCE/COMMON NAME	HISTORIC CONTEXT	CONTRIBUTING				PROPERTY TYPE
				Bldg.	Site	Struct.	Obj.	
BL00-005	C1930	RANCH	08.08	1	0	0	1	16.5.1
BL00-005	C1922	HOUSE	16.01	1	0	0	1	16.5.1:5.2
BL00-006	C1905	ABAN RANCH	08.08	6	0	0	3	08.1
BL00-007	C1905	ABAN RANCH	08.08	6	0	0	1	08.1
BL00-008	1948	ST. JOHNS LUTH. CHURCH	02.03.03	4	0	0	2	02.1.4, 02.4.3
BL00-009	C1915	SCHNEIDERREIT RANCH	08.08	7	0	1	0	08.1
BL00-010	C1910	RANCH	08.08	19	0	0	3	08.1
BL00-012	C1890	ABAN RANCH	08.08	3	0	0	1	08.1
BL00-013	C1895	ABAN RANCH	08.08	3	0	0	1	08.1
BL00-014	C1910	ABAN SCHOOL	06.01.01	1	0	0	0	06.3.1:1
BL00-015	C1920	RANCH	08.08	3	0	0	2	08.1
BL00-016	C1895	ABAN HOUSE	08.08	2	0	0	1	08.1
BL00-017	C1900	ABAN FARMSTEAD	08.08	3	0	0	2	08.1

NeHBS NUMBER	DATE	RESOURCE/COMMON NAME	HISTORIC CONTEXT	CONTRIBUTING			PROPERTY TYPE	
				Bldg.	Site	Struct. Obj.		
BL00-018	C1906	RANCH	08.08, 16	2	0	0	0	08.1, 16.5.1
BL00-019	C1910	W. RANKIN RANCH	08.08	6	0	0	3	08.1
BL00-020	C1910	L. DOUGLASS RANCH	08.08	7	0	0	1	08.1
BL00-021	C1903	ABAN RANCH	08.08	3	0	0	1	08.1
BL00-022	C1900	ABAN RANCH	08.08	1	0	0	2	08.1
BL00-023	C1895	ABAN RANCH	08.08	9	0	0	3	08.1
BL00-024	C1885	ABAN DUGOUT	16.01, 08	1	0	0	0	16.5
BL00-025	C1910	ABAN SCHOOL	06.01.01	1	0	0	0	06.3.1:1
BL00-026	C1908	ABAN SCHOOL	06.01.01	1	0	0	0	06.3.1:1
BL00-027	C1905	ABAN SOD HSE	16.01	2	0	0	0	08.1
BL00-028	C1900	HOMESTEAD	16.01, 08	2	0	0	1	08.1
BL00-029	1940	HERSH SOD HSE	08.08	2	0	0	0	08.1
BL00-030	C1918	HOUSE	08.08	2	0	0	1	08.1
BL00-031	C1910	RANCH	08.08	2	0	0	1	08.1
BL00-032	C1890	ABAN HOMESTEAD	16.01	1	0	0	2	08.1
BL00-033	C1940	HARTLEY SOD HOUSE	16.01, 08	1	0	0	0	08.1
BL00-034	C1900	HARRIS SOD HOUSE	16.01, 08	1	0	0	1	08.1
BL00-035	C1910	RANGE CORRAL	08.08	0	0	0	2	08.2.7
BL00-036	C1903	MINISTER SOD HOUSE	16.01, 08	3	0	0	3	08.1
BL00-037	C1915	DIST. #14 SCHOOL	06.01.01	1	0	0	0	06.3.1:1
BL00-038	C1912	ABAN HOUSE	08.08	1	0	0	0	08.1
BL00-039	C1900	ABAN RANCH	08.08	3	0	0	2	08.1
BL00-040	C1908	ABAN SCHOOL	06.01.01	1	0	0	0	06.3.1:1
BL00-041	C1905	RANCH	08.08	6	0	0	1	08.1
BL00-042	C1910	HOUSE	16.01	4	0	0	1	16.5.1
BL00-043	C1938	MOTEL CABINS & HSE	13.02	3	0	0	1	12.3.2
BL00-044	C1910	RANCH	08.08	9	0	0	2	08.1



BL02: DUNNING, BLAINE COUNTY



NeHBS NUMBER	DATE	RESOURCE/COMMON NAME	HISTORIC CONTEXT	CONTRIBUTING				PROPERTY TYPE
				Bldg.	Site	Struct.	Obj.	
BL02-001	C1918	HOME STATE BANK	15.05	1	0	0	0	15.1.1
BL02-002	C1912	COMMERCIAL BLDG	12.02	1	0	0	0	12.1.1
BL02-003	C1900	HOUSE	16.01	2	0	0	0	16.5.1

NeHBS NUMBER	DATE	RESOURCE/COMMON NAME	HISTORIC CONTEXT	CONTRIBUTING			PROPERTY TYPE	
				Bldg.	Site	Struct. Obj.		
BL02-004	1938	DUNNING AUDITORIUM	07.07	3	0	0	0	07.1.2
BL02-006	C1890	HOUSE	16.01	1	0	0	1	16.5.1
BL02-007	C1908	HOUSE	16.01	1	0	0	1	16.5.1
BL02-008	C1900	HOUSE	16.01	1	0	0	0	16.5.1
BL02-009	C1910	HOUSE	16.01	1	0	0	0	16.5.1
BL02-010	C1918	HOUSE	16.01	3	0	0	0	16.5.1
BL02-011	C1895	HOUSE	16.01	1	0	0	0	16.5.1
BL02-012	C1903	ABAN HOUSE	16.01	2	0	0	0	16.5.1
BL02-013	C1910	HOUSE	16.01	2	0	0	0	16.5.1

APPENDIX 2:**RECONNAISSANCE RESEARCH DESIGN****1. Introduction**

It is the intention of this paper to contribute two important functions towards the execution of the Reconnaissance Survey of Blaine County. First, it will provide Save America's Heritage (SAVE) survey team with the guidelines by which the survey will be performed and secondly, it establishes a means of communicating these guidelines to the NeHBS Survey Coordinator for critique and refinement.

The format of this Research Design will be to discuss first the "non-mechanical" aspects of the survey, followed by a discussion of the tasks considered more "mechanical" in nature. The primary purpose of the "mechanical" discussion is to define the documentation process used in the recording of historic properties while the "non-mechanical" discussion will consist of the survey objectives and limitations.

2. Objectives Of Reconnaissance Survey

After completing a preliminary outline of the objectives associated with a reconnaissance survey, it became apparent that there was an obvious division between those objectives which were qualitative in nature and those that were quantitative. This division has organized the reconnaissance objectives into the two listings that follow.

Qualitative Objectives:

The most obvious objective in a reconnaissance survey is the concept of providing a preliminary characterization of the historic resources extant in a particular geographic area. Beyond this are several other objectives which enhance both the data collected by the survey and the need for the survey itself. First among these additional objectives is the concept of establishing the setting of Nebraska's historic architecture. Each historic building survey performed will generate information which contributes to a statewide knowledge and builds a background with which future survey information can be evaluated.

Secondly, it is the objective of the historic building survey to identify specific properties or geographic areas which, in the event of an intensive survey, would contribute useful information to the above mentioned setting. Further qualitative objectives include: the possible identification of specific building types, the identification of construction methods which may relate to or are unique to the context of Nebraska's historic architecture, the identification of sites worthy of National Register listing, and the expansion of knowledge relative to a specific geographic area within the state context such as ethnic settlement, building technologies and architectural image.

Outline of Qualitative Objectives:

1. To create a community awareness and interest in Historic Preservation and the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).
2. The documentation of several significant properties potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places as

individual, multiple property, or historic district nominations.

3. To document information pertinent to the NeSHPO Topical Listing of Historic Contexts and associated property types.
4. To complete a comprehensive, conscientious survey which will generate information useful to the planning process and future surveys.
5. The collation of survey data for planning intensive survey work.
6. To record information useful to the local planning decisions of the county when assessing projects affecting historic properties. (Section 106) etc.
7. To record any potential links between a particular ethnic settlement and its associated property types within the survey area.
8. To promote historic preservation through the identification and publication of the historic properties located within the county.
9. To identify properties whose owners may be eligible for various kinds of federal, state, and local assistance in the event the owner pursues the preservation, restoration, or rehabilitation of their historic building(s).

Quantitative Objectives:

- A. The recording of an estimated 100 properties in Blaine County at the completion of the survey.
- B. The covering of approximately 80,000 acres (125 square miles) in Blaine County. In addition, each street of both towns in Blaine will be surveyed using reconnaissance survey methods.
- C. Identification of at least 15 properties worthy of nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.
- D. Identification of at least one possible Historic District or Multiple Property nomination worthy of National Register pursuit.
- E. Evaluating by the following hierarchy those sites for: a) high potential for significance, b) suspicious buildings--those buildings that may be of significance, c) no potential in

comparison to others, d) those sites not likely to yield any information.

3. Methods of Reconnaissance Survey.

The "mechanical" aspect of reconnaissance historic building surveys will focus primarily upon the documentation process and corresponding methods used in the recording of historic resources. The recording technique is considered of prime importance and it is the attitude of Save America's Heritage to strive for a conscientious effort and accurate method while recording historic resources. To best communicate our intentions, the following discussion on survey methods has been organized into three groups. These are: 1) pre-field research, 2) pre-field activities, and 3) field activities.

Pre-Field Research

Following the selection of the survey geographic boundaries by the NeSHPO, the pre-field research is begun and focuses primarily on the performance of archival research. The main purpose of archival research is to identify the nature of the survey area settlement by culture, geographic location, and time frame. In addition, the archival research should attempt to identify potential themes of architectural, cultural, and historical significance within the survey area, should they exist. While it is acknowledged that the extent and availability of research information varies according to the events and background of the area, the following references will be investigated prior to the reconnaissance survey: locally written county histories, county histories written within a statewide history, existing survey data in the NeSHPO site

files including survey forms, the files of the NSHS photographic collections, centennial publications on community and church histories, archival maps and atlases, newspaper articles concerning a community's built environment, and literature published by local or county historical groups. The majority of these types of publications can be found in the libraries of state and county historical societies. A bibliography of all sources referenced should be maintained and, along with photocopied information, added to the site files. These general data files are organized according to specific counties, local communities, and individual sites. The files are used prior to reconnaissance survey to familiarize the surveyors with the survey area and are consulted again in the field during the survey. Added to the general files are all forms of public correspondence received up to the point the survey is begun.

Due to the absence of an existing Historic Overview report, extensive preparation becomes necessary to satisfactorily develop the concepts of the report. The content of the Historic Overview is considered a prime source of pre-survey information. Therefore, the following is an outline of the methodology to be employed by SAVE's personnel during the composition of the county Historic Overview.

Each Historic Overview report will identify important patterns, events, persons, or cultural values pertaining to the county. It is anticipated that the information within the Historic Overview will aid in the identification of property types associated with each individual theme. In the preparation of the Historic Overview, the following will be considered:

A. Trends in area settlement and development.

- B. Aesthetic and artistic values embodied in architecture, construction technology, or craftsmanship.
- C. Research values or problems relevant to the county, social and physical sciences and humanities, and cultural interests of local communities.
- D. Intangible cultural values of ethnic groups and native American people.

Pre-Field Activities:

The topic of pre-field activities are considered separate from pre-field research on the basis of their more publicly extroverted nature. Save America's Heritage will begin the pre-field activities with the distribution of notices announcing the survey and its intentions to all the general public. This will be done by placing general notices in established commercial and non-commercial facilities of the communities, such as the United States Post Office, grocery stores, coffee shops, etc. Reinforcing this is the dispersal of press releases to all active newspapers existing in the county. The intent of the release is to inform the public of the survey programs and to solicit their input in the identification of historic resources. In addition to this, communication will be established with the local historians and historical societies detaining our intent and welcoming their possible input. Included in this communication will be information concerning pertinent Historic Contexts and the time frame of the survey. The final task of pre-field activity will be the precautionary attempts to eliminate public suspicion. The justifiable suspicion aroused by survey activities will potentially be eliminated through the listing of survey vehicles and personnel with local police departments and county sheriff patrols.

Field Activities--General:

The first step prior to embarking on the survey would be the assembling of the necessary documents used during the recording of historic properties. This includes town plat maps, USGS 7 1/2 minute topographical maps, county road maps, site files and the preparation of the Historic Overview. The recording of the historic properties will be conducted during the reconnaissance survey and will consist of a four step process: 1) identifying structures, 2) mapping locations, 3) recording of SQLE information and 4) photographic documentation. Any supplemental field notes derived from observations or public communications will also be added.

The reconnaissance photography would consist of two photographs per site from opposite 45 degree angles using a wide angle perspective correcting lens. In certain cases, additional photographs of the more significant buildings will be recorded showing environmental setting, architectural details, or construction methods. Descriptions of each site will be recorded as required by the SQLE data entry established by the NeSHPO. For domestic buildings, the supratypological analysis developed by The Midwest Vernacular Architecture Committee will be used in the description process. Photographic field notes will also be kept concerning the aspect of the image, exposure number, and corresponding roll number. In addition to the recording of the information listed above, further research will be conducted on those sites which are considered to have greater significance.

A primary concept in the documentation of historic buildings is the

recognition that different building types may require different recording techniques. Therefore, it is necessary for the surveyor to define the specific types of information most relevant to the property type being recorded.

4. Reconnaissance Survey Biases

Integrity:

To be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, a property must possess integrity. Integrity is the authenticity of a property's historic identity, evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property's historic period. If a property retains the physical characteristics it possessed in the past then it has the capacity to convey association with historical patterns or persons, architectural design, or information about a culture or people. Consequently, the determination of integrity is considered a most important field activity.

For reconnaissance-level documentation, two very basic questions must first be asked. These are:

1. Is the building at least 50 years old?
2. Does it retain its original integrity?

The answer to question number one is usually quite objective, however, the determination of integrity requires some discussion.

It must first be recognized that the degree of integrity exhibited by historic buildings can vary greatly. The principal investigator must first ask, "Does this property reflect its historic character or has it been altered by the application of contemporary building materials and technologies?" In most

instances, the house is the first building scrutinized, especially in the case of town surveys where they represent the majority of extant buildings. However, the importance of "house integrity" is diminished when dealing with buildings located in rural settings. For most cases in Nebraska, this means a farmstead. With the added significance of agriculture related buildings such as hay, horse and livestock barns, granaries, corn cribs, and elevators, a limited amount of alteration to the house should not prevent the site from being documented. In the case where a farmstead contains a large collection of historic farm buildings but a severely altered house, the site will be documented as a farmstead with a noncontributing house. A final case may exist where a single, highly significant, farm related building is located within an otherwise altered farmstead. In this event, Save America's Heritage will document the individual building designating a site number solely to the specific building, structure, or object.

Integrity also appears to play an important role in the field documentation of commercial buildings. Traditionally, buildings used for commerce have been adaptively reused by subsequent generations. These buildings are positioned along a primary local thoroughfare or even a regionally important highway, thus lending appeal to present-day retailers seeking new locations. Often the buildings are physically altered to accommodate new functions and therefore suffer a loss of integrity. With this in mind, only those buildings exhibiting the visual characteristics of their historic period will be documented.

In summary, the determination of integrity will be based upon the historic retention of the following physical characteristics.

- Materials:** Does the building retain the original materials from its period of historic importance.
- Location:** Is the building placed in its original location or has it been moved?
- Design:** Does the building reflect the design aesthetics of its historic period?
- Setting:** Does the building reflect a historic sense of place? Does the historic image and feel still exist?
- Function:** Does the building represent its historic use?

Characteristics of Rural Integrity:

With the concept of Rural Historic Districts added to the National Register process, the principal investigator is forced to develop new visual sensitivities which are sympathetic to the qualities of rural settings. New methods of survey and research must be added to our understanding of both the built and natural environment and the historic relationship between them.

With this in mind, Save America's Heritage will attempt, without contractual obligation, to observe the following characteristics of potential significance to rural historic enclaves:

- * The condition and presence of features, natural and built, which relate to a historic period of importance.
- * The ability of a rural environment to reflect a sense of a past time or place.
- * Potential unifying factors which may link rural properties together.
- * The overall patterns of landscape spatial organization (land forms, natural features, material components).
- * Land-use categories and activities farming, ranching, recreation).
- * Response to natural features (landform affect on material components).
- * Boundaries (cultural, political, or natural).

- * Cluster arrangements (position of material elements within landscape setting).
- * Ecological context.
- * Integrity: Loss of natural features that were historically integral to the rural setting and intrusion of non-contributing features.

5. Anticipated Property Types.

Save America's Heritage anticipates the identification of historic properties in each of the following thirteen categories.

Religion: Churches, church schools, parsonages, and convents

Aesthetic Systems: decorative Arts, sculpture, paintings.

Government: Courthouses, Post Offices, Town Halls.

Association: Fraternal, service and social organizations.

Education: Schools, libraries, museums.

Diversion: Park grounds, theaters, recreational facilities.

Agriculture: hay/horse barns, cattle barns, hog barns, cattle fences, cellars, cob houses, orchards, windmills, windbreaks, pump systems, cattle loafing sheds, hog loafing sheds, farrowing houses, corn cribs, wash houses, summer kitchen, chicken houses, brooder houses, machine shops, implement sheds, granaries, silos, elevators, and stock tank systems.

Processing Industries: Meat packing, dairy, poultry.

Commerce: stores, hotels, elevators.

Transportation: Gas stations, rail depots, motels, auto showrooms.

Communications: Telephone, newspaper, and publishing houses.

Services: Professional, financial and health buildings.

Settlement Systems: Houses, apartments and boarding houses.

6. Evaluation Process and Criteria

Process of Evaluation:

Two primary reasons exist for the evaluation of the resources documented by the Historic Building Survey. The first is the identification of properties worthy of nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, and the second is the designation of those properties to be preserved by local planning processes. The National Register criterion A, B, C, and D as translated by the Historic Context Reports shall be the basis for evaluation.

The Preliminary Inventory is the primary reference list of all properties within Blaine County that are potentially eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). Therefore, its primary purpose is to define the entire "pool" of historic resources which appear potentially eligible for listing.

The Preliminary inventory also fulfills additional roles which include its use as a guide for suggesting future work in the study area and the identification of building types which are no longer extant or never existed within the study area. The analysis of the inventoried data may also provide the NeSHPO with answers to the following questions:

1. What percentage of the total number of properties surveyed were worthy of intensive survey on the basis of their association to an identified historic theme or to a preliminarily identified Historic Context?
 2. What percentage of the total number of properties surveyed were worthy of intensive survey as non-historic context sites?
 3. What percentage of those properties noted during the field survey as potentially significant were actually found to be significant?
- Save America's Heritage originally viewed the assembling of the

Preliminary Inventory as a two-step process consisting of survey and review. However, as outlined below, a refined methodology has evolved from previous survey experience which now involves several levels of evaluation. What has emerged is a more in-depth compilation of potential NRHP sites using a variety of historic and contemporary resources.

1. Initial base list of potentially eligible properties derived from review of reconnaissance survey documentation.
2. Review of contact sheets and property descriptions performed to add or delete base-list properties.
3. Review all published county, church, and centennial histories, with particular emphasis on historic building citations concerning the base-list properties.
4. Contact local historical societies for input on histories of base-list properties.
5. Second base-list review with application of criterion to derive final lists of sites which:
 - a) are strongly recommended for NRHP listing, and b) may not be strongly recommended for listing but contribute to the character of the historic built environment.

Criteria For Evaluation:

If the ultimate goal of the Nebraska Historic Buildings Survey is indeed the identification of properties worthy of National Register listing, then the definitions and criteria established by the NRHP become the primary concepts by which the significance of a historic property is evaluated.

The National Register defines a historic property as a district, site, building, structure, or object significant in American history, architecture, engineering, archeology, and culture. A historic context is a broad pattern of historical development in a community or its region, that may be represented by

historic resources. The use of historic contexts provides a mechanism for translating the broad National Register criteria into locally meaningful terms. For example, the National Register criteria allow any property that is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past to be regarded as eligible for listing, but it is the historic contexts of the area that define who such people were (p. 55, National Register Bulletin, No. 24, V. 5, Department of the interior). With this in mind, the National Register criteria translated into local meaning by the Historic Context Reports are as follows:

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

- A. that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

APPENDIX 3:

Index of Abbreviations

The following index attempts to explain the abbreviations used by the survey team while recording historic buildings in the nine county area of the northern Nebraska Sand Hills survey project. These abbreviations were developed as a means of expediting the survey recording process. The need for abbreviations was especially necessary in the recording of rural-based historic properties. In these cases, every effort was made to note each building, structure and object which contributed to the historic character of the property. Many of the abbreviations were developed by the NeSHPO during their former surveys of historic buildings throughout Nebraska. The remaining group of abbreviations were developed by Save America's Heritage with the approval of the NeSHPO.

Fr.	= Frame	Addn.	= Addition
Br.	= Brick	Cent.	= Central
Conc. Blk.	= Concrete Block	Enc.	= Enclosed
Frmhse.	= Farmhouse	Att.	= Attached
Frmstd.	= Farmstead	Perpend.	= Perpendicular
Hse.	= House	Symm.	= Symmetrical
S.K.	= Summer Kitchen	Lg.	= Large
Ckn. Hse.	= Chicken House	G.W.D.	= Gable Wall Dormer
Gar.	= Garage	Gab.	= Gable
Gran.	= Granary	Drmr.	= Dormer
D.T. Gran.	= Drive-thru Granary	Aban.	= Abandoned
D.T. Crib	= Drive-thru Crib	Det.	= Deteriorated
L.S.	= Loafing Shed	Outbldg.	= Outbuilding

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